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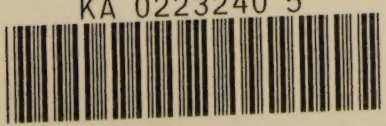

LETTERS OF

HORACE WALPOLE

MRS. PAGET TOYNBEE

HENRY FROWDE, M.A.
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
LONDON, EDINBURGH
NEW YORK

Horace Walpole

from a plaque in Battersea enamel.

Walker & Cockerell Ph. Sc.

THE LETTERS

OF

HORACE WALPOLE

FOURTH EARL OF ORFORD

CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED

AND EDITED WITH NOTES AND INDICES

BY

MRS. PAGET TOYNBEE

IN SIXTEEN VOLUMES

WITH PORTRAITS AND FACSIMILES

VOL. IX: 1774—1776

OXFORD

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

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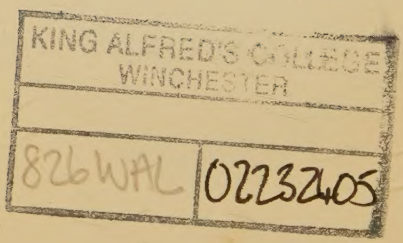

CONTENTS OF VOL. IX

	PAGES
List of Portraits	vi
List of Letters in Volume IX	vii-xii
Letters 1540-1742	1-454

LIST OF PORTRAITS

HORACE WALPOLE . . . . . *Frontispiece*
From plaque in Battersea enamel in South Kensington Museum.

FACSIMILE OF LETTER OF HORACE WALPOLE TO MADAME DU DEFFAND . . . . . *To face p.* 130

REV. WILLIAM MASON . . . . . „ 178
From painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds *in possession of* Pembroke College, Cambridge.

ELIZABETH BERKELEY, BARONESS CRAVEN . „ 331
From painting by G. Romney *in* National Portrait Gallery.

ROBERT CLIVE, FIRST BARON CLIVE . . . „ 400
From painting by N. Dance *in* National Portrait Gallery.

LIST OF LETTERS IN VOL. IX

T			C
		1774.	
1540	May 28, 1774 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1434
1541	June 8, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1435
1542	June 14, 1774. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1437
1543†	June 19, 1774. . .	Sir William Hamilton.	
1544	June 23, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1439
1545	July 10, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1440
1546	July 19, 1774 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1441
1547	July 21, 1774. . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1438
1548	July 30, 1774 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1442
1549	Aug. 3, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1443
1550	Aug. 10, 1774. . .	George Augustus Selwyn .	1444
1551	Aug. 11, 1774. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1445
1552	Aug. 15, 1774. . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1446
1553	Aug. 18, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1447
1554	Aug. 23, 1774. . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1448
1555	Aug. 23, 1774. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1449
1556	Sept. 2, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1450
1557	Sept. 7, 1774 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1451
1558	Sept. 14, 1774. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1452
1559	Sept. 16, 1774. . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1453
1560†	Sept. 17, 1774. . .	John Fenn.	
1561†	Sept. 18, 1774. . .	Sir Horace Mann.	
1562	Sept. 26, 1774. . .	John Craufurd	1455
1563	Sept. 27, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1456
1564	Sept. 28, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1457
1565	Oct. 6, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1458
1566	Oct. 11, 1774 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1459
1567	[Oct. 1774] . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1454
1568	Oct. 15, 1774 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1460
1569	Oct. 16, 1774 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1461
1570	Oct. 22, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1462
1571	Oct. 27, 1774 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1463
1572	Oct. 29, 1774 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1464
1573	Nov. 7, 1774 . . .	Countess of Ailesbury . .	1465

† Now printed for the first time.

T			C
1574	Nov. 11, 1774.	Sir Horace Mann	1466
1575	Nov. 11, 1774.	Earl of Strafford.	1467
1576	Nov. 11, 1774.	Isaac Reed	2662
1577	Nov. 12, 1774.	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1468
1578	Nov. 14, 1774.	Countess of Upper Ossory	1469
1579	Nov. 23, 1774.	Countess of Upper Ossory	1470
1580	Nov. 24, 1774.	Sir Horace Mann	1471
1581	Nov. 27, 1774.	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1472
1582	Dec. 15, 1774.	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1473
1583†	Dec. 23, 1774.	Sir Horace Mann.	
1584	Dec. 26, 1774.	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1474
1585	[Dec. 1774]	George Augustus Selwyn.	
1586†	Ce 26 Déc. 1774	Marquise du Deffand.	
1587	Dec. 31, 1774.	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1475

1775.

1588	Jan. 1, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1476
1589	Jan. 2, 1775	John Craufurd	1477
1590†	Ce 4 Janv. 1775	Marquise du Deffand.	
1591	Jan. 9, 1775	Rev. William Cole	1478
1592	Jan. 9, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1479
1593	Jan. 12, 1775.	Countess of Upper Ossory	1480
1594†	Jan. 12, 1775.	Earl of Hardwicke.	
1595†	Ce 13 Janv. 1775	Marquise du Deffand.	
1596	Jan. 15, 1775.	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway and Countess of Ailesbury.	1481
1597	Jan. 15, 1775.	Countess of Upper Ossory	1482
1598	Jan. 17, 1775.	Duke of Gloucester	1483
1599†	Ce 19 Janv. 1775	Marquise du Deffand.	
1600	Jan. 21, 1775.	Countess of Upper Ossory	1484, 1488
1601	Jan. 22, 1775.	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1485
1602	Jan. 24, 1775.	Countess of Upper Ossory	1486
1603	Jan. 25, 1775.	Sir Horace Mann	1487
1604†	Ce 27 Janv. 1775	Marquise du Deffand.	
1605†	Ce 31 Janv. 1775	Marquise du Deffand.	
1606	Feb. 1, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1489
1607	Feb. 15, 1775.	Sir Horace Mann	1490
1608	Feb. 18, 1775.	Rev. William Mason	1491
1609	Feb. 28, 1775.	Rev. William Mason	1492
1610	March 7, 1775	Rev. William Mason	1493

† Now printed for the first time.

T			C
1611	March 20, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1494
1612	April 3, 1775	Rev. William Mason	1495
1613	April 11, 1775	Rev. William Cole	1496
1614	April 14, 1775	Rev. William Mason	1497
1615	April 17, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1498 1499
1616	April 25, 1775	Rev. William Cole	1500
1617	May 7, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1501
1618	May 7, 1775	Rev. William Mason	1502
1619	May 17, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1503
1620	May 27, 1775	Rev. William Mason	1504
1621	June 5, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1505
1622	June 5, 1775	Rev. William Cole	1506
1623	June 12 [1775]	Rev. William Mason	1436
1624	June 14, 1775	Viscount Nuneham	1507
1625	June 23, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1508
1626	July 6, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1509
1627	July 7, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1510
1628	July 9, 1775	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1511
1629	July 10, 1775	Rev. William Mason	1512
1630	July 18, 1775	Viscount Nuneham	1513
1631	July 23, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1514
1632	Aug. 3, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1515
1633	Aug. 3, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1516
1634	Aug. 7, 1775	Rev. William Mason	1517
1635	Aug. 9, 1775	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1518
1636	Aug. 10, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1519 1520
1637	Aug. 17, 1775	Countess of Ailesbury	1521
1638	Aug. 18, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1522
1639	Aug. 20, 1775	Countess of Ailesbury	1523
1640	Aug. 23 [1775]	Countess of Upper Ossory	1524
1641	Sept. 6, 1775	Rev. William Mason	1525
1642	Sept. 7, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1526
1643	Sept. 8, 1775	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1527
1644	[Sept. 1775]	Countess of Upper Ossory	1531
1645	Sept. 12, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1528 1529
1646	Sept. 16, 1775	George Augustus Selwyn	1530
1647	Oct. 3, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1532
1648	Oct. 6, 1775	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1533
1649	Oct. 10, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1534
1650	Oct. 17, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1535

T			C
1651	Oct. 21, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1536
1652	Oct. 23, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1537
1653	Oct. 25, 1775	Rev. William Mason	1538
1654	Oct. 27, 1775	Rev. William Mason	1539
1655	Oct. 27, 1775	Duke of Richmond	1540
1656	Oct. 28, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1541
1657	Nov. 9, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1542
1658	Nov. 14, 1775.	Sir Horace Mann	1543
1659	Nov. 18, 1775.	Countess of Upper Ossory	1544
1660	Nov. 23, 1775.	Countess of Upper Ossory	1545
1661	Nov. 27, 1775.	Rev. William Mason	1546
1662	Dec. 4, 1775	Countess of Upper Ossory	1547
1663	Dec. 8, 1775	Sir Horace Mann	1548
1664	Dec. 10, 1775.	Rev. William Cole	1549
1665	Dec. 11, 1775.	Countess of Ailesbury	1550
1666	Dec. 14, 1775.	Rev. William Cole	1551
1667†	Dec. 14, 1775.	Rev. Thomas Percy.	
1668	Dec. 17, 1775.	Sir Horace Mann	1552
1669	Dec. 19, 1775.	Thomas Astle	1553
1670	Dec. 20, 1775.	Countess of Upper Ossory	1554
1671	Dec. 21, 1775.	Rev. William Mason	1555
1672	Dec. 25, 1775.	John Robinson.	
1673	Dec. 26, 1775.	Sir Horace Mann	1556
1674	Dec. 27, 1775.	Countess of Upper Ossory	1557
1675†	Dec. 1775	Sir Horace Mann.	

1776.

1676	Jan. 26, 1776	Rev. William Cole	1558
1677	Jan. 28, 1776.	Sir Horace Mann	1559
1678	[Feb. 1776]	Edward Gibbon.	1560
1679	Feb. 6 [1776].	Rev. William Mason	1561
1680	Feb. 14, 1776.	Edward Gibbon.	1562
1681	Feb. 15, 1776.	Sir Horace Mann	1563
1682	Feb. 18, 1776.	Rev. William Mason	1564
1683	Feb. 29, 1776.	Rev. William Mason	1565
1684	March 1, 1776	Rev. William Cole	1566
1685	March 11, 1776	Rev. William Mason	1567
1686	March 22, 1776	Sir Horace Mann	1568
1687	April 4, 1776.	Dr. Gem	1569
1688	April 8, 1776.	Rev. William Mason	1570
1689	[April 1776]	Rev. William Mason	1571

† Now printed for the first time.

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1690	April 16, 1776 . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1572
1691	April 17, 1776 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1573
1692	April 20, 1776 . .	Rev. William Mason . .	1574
1693	April 21, 1776 . .	Rev. William Mason . .	1575
1694	April 23, 1776 . .	Rev. William Mason . .	1576
1695	April 24, 1776 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1577
1696	May 4, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . .	1579
1697	May 14, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . .	1580
1698	May 17, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1581
1699	May 20, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . .	1582
1700	May 27, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1583
1701	[May 1776] . . .	Viscount Nuneham . . .	1584
1702	June 1, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1585
1703	June 5, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1586
1704	June 11, 1776 . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1587
1705	June 20, 1776 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1588
1706	Ce 23 Juin 1776 . .	Count Schuwalof.	
1707	June 25, 1776 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1589
1708	June 30, 1776 . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1590
1709	July 10, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1591
1710	July 13, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1592
1711	July 16, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1593
1712	July 17, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1594
1713	July 23, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1595
1714	July 24, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1596
1715	Aug. 4, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1597
1716	Aug. 11, 1776 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1598
1717	Aug. 16, 1776 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1599
1718	Aug. 19, 1776 . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1600
1719	Aug. 20, 1776 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1601
1720	Aug. 22, 1776 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1602
1721	Sept. 9, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1603
1722	Sept. 17, 1776 . .	Rev. William Mason . .	1604
1723	Sept. 20, 1776 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1605
1724	Sept. 22, 1776 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1606
1725	Oct. 8, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . .	1607
1726	Oct. 9, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1608
1727	Oct. 13, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1609
1728	Oct. 13, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1610
1729	Thursday, [Oct.] 31, [1776]	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1611
1730	Nov. 1, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1612
1731	Nov. 2, 1776 . . .	Earl of Strafford . . .	1613

T			C
1732	[Nov. 1776] . . .	Rev. William Mason	Part of 1604
1733	Nov. 13, 1776. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory	1614
1734	Nov. 24, 1776. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1615
1735	Dec. 1, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1616
1736	Dec. 3, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory	1617
1737	Dec. 9, 1776 . . .	George Allan.	
1738	Dec. 9, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1618
1739	Dec. 17, 1776. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory	1619
1740	Dec. 20, 1776. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1620
1741	Dec. 23, 1776. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory	1621
1742†	[1776]	Comtesse de Viry.	

† Now printed for the first time.

THE LETTERS

OF

HORACE WALPOLE

1540. To the Rev. William Cole.

Strawberry Hill, May 28, 1774.

Nothing will be more agreeable to me, dear Sir, than a visit from you in July. I will try and persuade Mr. Granger to meet you; and if you had any such thing as summer in the fens, I would desire you to bring a bag with you. We are almost freezing here in the midst of beautiful verdure, with a profusion of blossoms and flowers: but I keep good fires, and seem to feel warm weather while I look through the window, for the way to ensure summer in England is to have it framed and glazed in a comfortable room.

I shall be still more glad to hear you are settled in your living. Burnham[1] is almost in my neighbourhood, and its being in that of Eton and Windsor will more than console you, I hope, for leaving Ely and Cambridge. Pray let me know the moment you are certain. It would now be a disappointment to me as well as you. You shall be inaugurated in my chapel, which is much more venerable than your parish church, and has the genuine air of antiquity. I bought very little at poor Mr. Bateman's. His nephew disposed of little that was worth house-room, and yet pulled the whole to pieces.

Letter 1540.—[1] Cole succeeded his half-brother, Dr. Apthorpe, as vicar of Burnham in Buckinghamshire in June 1774.

Mr. Pennant[2] has published a new tour to Scotland and the Hebrides, and, though he has endeavoured to paint their dismal isles and rocks in glowing colours, they will not be satisfied, for he seems no bigot about Ossian, at least in some passages, and is free in others, which their intolerating spirit will resent. I cannot say the book is very entertaining to me, as it is more a book of rates than of antiquities. The most amusing part was communicated to him by Mr. Banks, who found whole islands that bear nothing but columns, as other places do grass and barley. There is a beautiful cave called Fingal's, which proves that nature loves Gothic architecture.

Mr. Pennant has given a new edition of his former tour with more cuts. Among others is the vulgar head called the Countess of Desmond. I told him I had discovered, and proved past contradiction, that it is Rembrandt's mother; he owned it, and said he would correct it by a note—but he has not. This is a brave way of being an antiquary; as if there could be any merit in giving for genuine what one knows is spurious. He is, indeed, a superficial man, and knows little of history or antiquity—but he has a violent rage for being an author. He set out with ornithology, and a little natural history, and picks up his knowledge as he rides. I have a still lower idea of Mr. Gough; for Mr. Pennant, at least, is very civil. The other is a hog. Mr. Fenn[3], another smatterer in antiquity, but a very good sort of man, told me Mr. Gough desired to be introduced to me—but as he has been such a bear to you, he shall not come. The Society of Antiquaries put me in mind of what the old Lord Pembroke said to Anstis the

[2] Thomas Pennant (1726–1798). He visited Scotland in 1769 and 1772, and published accounts of both tours.

[3] John Fenn (1739–1794), knighted in 1787. He was the first editor of the *Paston Letters*. A series of letters addressed to him by Walpole is printed for the first time in the present edition.

herald: 'Thou silly fellow, thou dost not know thy own silly business.' If they went beyond taste by poking into barbarous ages when there was no taste, one could forgive them—but they catch at the first ugly thing they see, and take it for old, because it is new to them, and then usher it pompously into the world as if they had made a discovery, though they have not yet cleared up a single point that is of the least importance, or that tends to settle any obscure passage in history.

I will not condole with you on having had the gout, since you find it has removed other complaints. Besides, as it begins late, you are never likely to have it severely. I shall be in terrors in two or three months, having had the four last fits periodically and biennially. Indeed, the two last were so long and severe, that my remaining and shattered strength could ill support such.

I must repeat how glad I shall be to have you at Burnham. When people grow old, as you and I do, they should get together. Others do not care for us, but we seem wiser to one another by finding fault with them—not that I am apt to dislike young folks, whom I think everything becomes; but it is a kind of self-defence to live in a body. I dare to say that monks never find out that they grow old fools. Their age gives them authority, and nobody contradicts them. In the world, one cannot help perceiving one is out of fashion. Women play at cards with women of their own standing, and censure others between the deals, and thence conclude themselves Gamaliels. I, who see many young men with better parts than myself, submit with a good grace, or retreat hither to my castle, where I am satisfied with what I have done, and am always in good humour; but I like to have one or two old friends with me—I do not much invite the juvenile, who think my castle and me of equal antiquity, for no wonder, if they

suppose that George I lived in the time of the Crusades. Adieu! my good Sir, and pray let Burnham Wood and Dunsinane be good neighbours.

Yours ever,
Hor. Walpole.

1541. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, June 8, 1774.

We are still in the dark about Louis XVI, and do not know whether he designs to make war on the old ministers, on us, or on the ladies of pleasure. They represent him as covetous, but he has only retrenched some tables at court, and has remitted a great sum to the people. As the blessings of the latter are more desirable than those of the nobility, I am apt to think they are more prevalent too than the maledictions of the latter.

As yet there seem to be no colours hung out by which one can judge. D'Aiguillon, it is thought, will fall, though he is said to have betrayed [1] Madame du Barri, and to have prevented her escape. Were I an absolute monarch, which such a man would make one wish oneself, I would forbid him ever to set his foot in a town where there was a single gentleman, as not fit to breathe where there is one. Old La Vrillière [2], another wretch, is likely to fall too, unpitied. I wish the Chancellor [3] may too, who is a villainous bashaw. Maurepas [4] does not gain ground. No exiles are recalled. Were the Duc de Choiseul to rise again, I could easily tell what would happen. The Mesdames have had the small-pox, and have escaped, which

Letter 1541.—[1] This did not prove true. *Walpole.*

[2] Mons. de St. Florentine, Secretary of State, and then Duc de la Vrillière. *Walpole.*

[3] Maupeou. *Walpole.*

[4] The Comte de Maurepas was disgraced in 1749. Louis XVI recalled him to court, and made him Chef du Conseil des Finances.

makes one glad after such meritorious behaviour,—meritorious, but which it was cruel not to restrain.

Indeed, we want no foreign war: the scene in America grows serious. We have this week heard that New York has taken as warm a part as Boston against the teas. The House of Commons sits very late every day, though at this season, on a bill for settling Canada; and though it is said the Parliament will rise next week, I should think the prorogation would be very short, till the news from America are better. Lord Chatham has appeared in the House of Lords, but pleased nobody but Lord Temple, with whom he is again strictly united, which you may mention to his sister[5]. This is the sum of public history, at least that I know, who have been very little in town this month.

The Duke of Devonshire and Lady Georgiana Spencer were married on Sunday; and this month Lord Stanley marries Lady Betty Hamilton[6]. He gives her a most splendid entertainment to-morrow at his villa[7] in Surrey, and calls it a *fête champêtre*. It will cost five thousand pounds. Everybody is to go in masquerade, but not in mask. He has bought all the orange-trees round London, and the haycocks, I suppose, are to be made of straw-coloured satin.

Lady Mary Coke is arrived. She has not been false to the Duke of York's bed, but was so frail as to cuckold his vault; for she went down into that at St. Denis with Louis Quatorze, as she did into that at Westminster when the Princess died. Her Grace of Kingston, though a phenomenon, is no original; the purchase of Sixtus Quintus's

[5] Miss Anne Pitt, then in Florence.

[6] Lady Elizabeth Hamilton (d. 1797), daughter of sixth Duke of Hamilton; m. (June 23, 1774) Edward Smith-Stanley, Lord Stanley, who succeeded his grandfather as twelfth Earl of Derby in 1776.

[7] The Oaks, Epsom.

villa[8] seems to be an imitation of that stroller, Queen Christina.

My chapel is finished, and Donatello's St. John is enshrined in it. In truth, every chamber at Strawberry is enriched with your presents, which are its most valuable ornaments;—the Caligula, the Castiglione, Bianca Capello, Benvenuto Cellini's casket, the Florentine box. Take notice, I have not an inch of space left, neither in my house nor my gratitude. I have even forgotten some, as the intaglia of an Apollo, and perhaps twenty things more.

I am sorry to tell Mrs. Pitt that her house at Knightsbridge has been led astray, the moment she turned her back: see what it is to live in a bad neighbourhood! *Pittsburgh*, the Temple of Vesta, is as naughty as Villa Kingstoniana; not that Dr. Elliot's pretty wife[9] has married another husband in his lifetime; but she has eloped with my Lord Valentia[10], who has another wife and some half-dozen children. The sages of Doctors' Commons are to be applied to. I am much obliged to Mrs. Pitt for forcing you to tell me you are safe from your verdigris. It would have been shocking to have heard it, and waited for the post. Her ball she described to you was very like the cloth of a thousand yards, on which were painted all the kings and queens in the universe, and which cloth was lapped up in the kernel of a nut. You are very happy in having such company; it will indemnify you for forty dozen of bears and bear-leaders, that you

[8] Then known as the Villa Negroni.

[9] Miss Dalrymple, wife of Sir John Elliot, the physician, from whom she was divorced for many adulteries, and became a celebrated courtesan, known by the name of Dolly the Tall. Sir J. Elliot had bought Mrs. Anne Pitt's villa at Knightsbridge, where the Duchess of Kingston and the Duke of Rutland's mistress had villas also. *Walpole.* — Mrs. Elliot was afterwards known as Mme. de St. Alban.

[10] Arthur Annesley (1744–1816), eighth Viscount Valentia, created Earl of Mountnorris in 1793; m. (1767) Hon. Lucy Fortescue Lyttelton (d. 1783), only daughter of first Baron Lyttelton.

have been endeavouring for these thirty years to tame, and the latter half of which never are licked into form. Adieu!

P.S. I am reading Montaigne's *Travels*, which have lately been found; there is little in them but the baths and medicines he took, and what he had everywhere for dinner. He was in Italy in 1580, and the only thing that has struck me in the first volume was his seeing Bianca Capello at dinner. He describes her very like your—my picture. She sat above the Duke, and her brother and his wife dined with them, and the Cardinal Ferdinand[11]. Montaigne says the houses in Italy at that time had no glass windows. His editor, who is a silly fellow, says Pius V obliged Cosimo the Great to marry his mistress Camilla Martelli[12]. I never heard this anecdote; is it true? Pray ask Mrs. Pitt if Madame Griffoni, though thirteen years younger, preserves any remains of beauty, like the Duchess of Queensberry. I take my Signora to be full threescore.

11th.

I had forgotten to send my letter to town, and so can answer one I have this instant received from you. I am more sorry for your disappointment in losing your new friend[13] than surprised. There is a strange oddness, that at times has been more than oddness; in short, I do not know whether I am quite sorry; it is better to have parted in violent friendship than the contrary.

The Duc d'Aiguillon is certainly out of place, and is succeeded by M. de Vergennes, Ambassador at Stockholm, of whom I know nothing; M. de Muy[14] has the *départe-*

[11] Cardinal Ferdinand de' Medici (1549–1609), afterwards Grand Duke of Tuscany as Ferdinand I.

[12] Cosimo I did marry Camilla Martelli. *Walpole.*

[13] Mrs. Anne Pitt. *Walpole.*

[14] Louis Nicolas Victor de Félix (1711–1775), Comte du Muy; Maréchal de France, 1775.

ment de la Guerre. The young King seems in no hurry. There is a notion that he does not love the English. I don't know where he will find the minister that does; but if the Queen has influence, and her brother [15] has any over her, we shall not have a war—from thence: I will not answer for Spain.

If Lady O. asks you any questions, pray only say you believe I am here, and that as her son is in the country on his side, you imagine we are not much together. I do not desire to give her reasons for quarrelling with him again.

1542. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, June 14, 1774.

Virgin Mary! offended at you, Madam! I have crossed myself forty times since I read the impious words, never to be pronounced by human lips,—nay, and to utter them, when I am seemingly to blame,—yet, believe me, my silence is not owing to negligence, or to that most wicked of all sins, inconstancy. I have thought on you waking or sleeping, whenever I have thought at all, from the moment I saw you last; and if there was an echo in the neighbourhood besides Mr. Cambridge, I should have made it repeat your Ladyship's name, till the parish should have presented it for a nuisance. I have begun twenty letters, but the naked truth is, I found I had absolutely nothing to say. You yourself owned, Madam, that I am grown quite lifeless, and it is very true. I am none of your Glastonbury thorns that blow at Christmas. I am a remnant of the last age, and have nothing to do with the present. I am an exile from the sunbeams of Drawing-rooms; I have quitted the gay scenes of Parliament and the Antiquarian Society; I am not of Almack's; I don't understand horse-races;

[15] The Emperor Joseph II, brother of Queen Marie Antoinette.

I never go to reviews; what can I have to talk of? I go to no *fêtes champêtres*, what can I have to think of? I know nothing but about myself, and about myself I know nothing. I have scarce been in town since I saw you, have scarce seen anybody here, and don't remember a tittle but having scolded my gardener twice, which, indeed, would be as important an article as any in Montaigne's *Travels*, which I have been reading, and if I was tired of his *Essays*, what must one be of these! What signifies what a man thought, who never thought of anything but himself; and what signifies what a man did, who never did anything?

I hear nothing from France, but that M. d'Aiguillon has given up the Seals. Lady Mary Coke is arrived, but as she never condescends to level her telescope but at the fixed stars, she certainly knows nothing of the meteors of the day, and therefore I shall not expect much intelligence from her.

Mr. Anstey, who ought to have shot himself the moment he had finished the *Bath Guide*, has published the most complete piece of stupidity I ever read. It is a satire on a parson who writes against him in the newspapers, and cannot, it is impossible, have written worse than Anstey himself. The latter has been enrolled in Mr. Miller's Parnassus at Bath, and is quite raving mad that his *bouts rimés* are not admired. What shall we come to? I am afraid of opening a new book. The reigning dullness is so profound, that it is not even ridiculous.

Thank Heaven the age is as dull as I am! Pray tell me, Madam, some of Lady Anne's *bons mots* to enliven me a little. I am expecting Lords Ashburnham, March, Digby, Williams, and George Selwyn.

N.B. I shall not ask for any of the Fagnanina's[1] sayings. It is a dinner in honour of Lord Ashburnham, who pro-

LETTER 1542.—[1] Maria Fagniani, who was adopted by Selwyn.

cured for me the window of my chapel, which is just finished and divine, and ready against the Catholic religion is quite restored. Miss Aikin[2] has been here this morning (she is just married); she desired to see the Castle of Otranto; I let her see all the antiquities of it.

1543. To Sir William Hamilton.

Strawberry Hill, June 19, 1774.

For fear of troubling you, dear Sir, with two letters instead of one, I waited for the arrival of the shields[1] before I thanked for them—but it put my gratitude to pain, for I did not receive them till the day before yesterday. Now they are come, it will, which is very selfish, double my gratitude, for they are fine and most charming—nay, almost in too good taste, not to put my Gothic house to shame—I wish the Medusas could turn it to stone! In short, I am exceedingly obliged to you; but though I have spared you one letter of my own, it will cost you another of yours, for you must tell me more about them. The two that are painted are in the great style of the best age; and by the Earl of Surry's shield in the Duke of Norfolk's possession, which is in the same manner as to the form and disposition, though not so bold, I should conclude they are by Polidore, or of that school. Pray satisfy me, and of the pedigree of the other too, which by the battlements on the buildings my house pretends is of its own family.

[2] Anna Letitia (1743–1825), daughter of Dr. John Aikin; m. (1774) Rev. Rochemont Barbauld. She was the author of the *Hymns in Prose for Children*.

Letter 1543.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. John W. Ford.

[1] 'Two shields of leather, for tournaments, painted by Polidore; one has the head of Medusa, the other of Perseus: on the insides are battles in gold. They came out of the collection of Commendatore Vittoria at Naples, and were sent to Mr. W. by Sir W. Hamilton, with a third of iron, representing the story of Curtius, but certainly not antique, as there is a cannon and an embattled tower at a distance.' (*Description of Strawberry Hill.*)

I am going to hang them by the beautiful armour of Francis I, and they will certainly make me dream of another Castle of Otranto, or at least of a tournament more superb than Lord Stanley's *fête champêtre*, though the latter cost half a million. Indeed, if gratitude was apt to colour one's dreams, I have so many monuments of your kindness and friendship, that my house and garden would make my sleep as agreeable as my waking hours. I should write another *Gerusalemme* for Eleanora d'Este [2], and pray for you in my new chapel, which is just finished, and where the shrine appears more gorgeous than the spoils

Of Ormus and of Ind.

I do not mean new Claremont, which is not half so magnificent. You will not expect English news at this time of year. We have none but what we import from France, where the new King and his brothers were to be inoculated yesterday. His Majesty is so economic that he will not give *fêtes champêtres*. The French, who did not intend to like, adore him; and the Queen, who is too much the *Virgin* Mary, has quite dethroned the latter in their idolatry. The Duc d'Aiguillon is removed, which delights almost everybody, and the Duc de Choiseul has been at Versailles, which pleases almost as many—though not us, for we have no mind to a war.

General Conway is gone a tour of armies, because he has not seen enough of them. Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer are to fetch him from Paris in October.

The Duke of Devonshire is married; Lord Stanley and Lady Betty Hamilton are to be in July. Some wedlocks are breaking too: Lord Valentia has preferred Dr. Elliot's

[2] A marble bas-relief, inscribed *Dia Helianora*, and representing the Princess with whom Tasso was in love, was presented to Horace Walpole by Sir William Hamilton. It was placed in the cloister at Strawberry Hill.

pretty wife to his own plain one; but I do not find that there was much preference on her side, but rather on the Doctor's, for he has selected Lord Valentia from several other lords and gentlemen who have been equally kind to the fair one.

We have the most delightful of all summers—fruits, flowers, corn, grass, leaves—in short, though Judæa flowed with milk and honey, I do not believe it was much richer than the present face of England. I know but one richer spot, which is Almack's, where a thousand meadows and cornfields are staked at every throw, and as many villages lost as in the earthquake that overwhelmed Herculaneum and Pompeii.

Pray tell Lady Hamilton I heard a new instrument yesterday, which transported me, though I have not the most musical ears in the world. It is a copulation of a harpsichord and a violin; one hand strikes the keys and the other draws the bow; the sounds are prolonged, and it is the softest and most touching melody I ever heard. The instrument is so small it stands on a table and is called a Celestinette[3]. St. Cecilia or Lady Hamilton would draw all the angels out of heaven with it, or immediately be appointed organists there.

Adieu! dear Sir—*shield* me from any more presents. Consider how you have loaded me, and though gratitude is seldom mortal, I cannot bear so many obligations. I do not know how to be enough

Your very thankful
Humble servant,
Hor. Walpole.

[3] It was invented by Mason the poet.

1544. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, June 23, 1774.

I have nothing to say—which is the best reason in the world for writing; for one must have a great regard for anybody one writes to, when one begins a letter neither on ceremony nor business. You are seeing armies[1], who are always in fine order and great spirits when they are in cold blood: I am sorry you thought it worth while to realize what I should have thought you could have seen in your mind's eye. However, I hope you will be amused and pleased with viewing heroes, both in their autumn and their bud. Vienna will be a new sight; so will the Austrian eagle and its two heads[2]. I should like *seeing*, too, if any fairy would present me with a chest that would fly up into the air by touching a peg, and transport me whither I pleased in an instant: but roads, and inns, and dirt are terrible drawbacks on my curiosity. I grow so old, or so indolent, that I scarce stir from hence; and the dread of the gout makes me almost as much a prisoner, as a fit of it. News I know none, if there is any. The papers tell me the City was to present a petition to the King against the Quebec Bill[3] yesterday; and I suppose they will tell me to-morrow whether it was presented. The

Letter 1544.—[1] Mr. Conway was now on a tour of military curiosity through Flanders, Germany, Prussia, and part of Hungary. *Walpole.*

[2] The Empress-Queen Maria Theresa and her son the Emperor Joseph, who was joint-regent of her hereditary states.

[3] 'The principal objects of the Quebec Bill were to ascertain the limits of that province, which were extended far beyond what had been settled as such by the King's proclamation of 1763. To form a legislative council for all the affairs of that province, except taxation, which council should be appointed by the crown, the office to be held during pleasure; and his Majesty's Canadian Roman Catholic subjects were entitled to a place in it. To establish the French laws, and a trial without jury, in civil cases, and the English laws, with a trial by jury, in criminal. To secure to the Roman Catholic clergy, except the Regulars, the legal enjoyment of their estates, and of their tithes from all who are of their own religion.' (*Ann. Reg.* 1774, p. 75.)

King's Speech tells me there has nothing happened between the Russians and the Turks. Lady Barrymore told me t'other day that nothing was to happen between her and Lord Egremont. I am as well satisfied with these negatives as I should have been with the contrary. I am much more interested about the rain, for it destroys all my roses and orange-flowers, of which I have exuberance; and my hay is cut, and cannot be made. However, it is delightful to have no other distresses. When I compare my present tranquillity and indifference with all I suffered last year[4], I am thankful for my happiness, and enjoy it—unless the bell rings at the gate early in the morning—and then I tremble, and think it an express from Norfolk.

It is unfortunate, that when one has nothing to talk of but oneself, one should have nothing to say of oneself. It is shameful, too, to send such a scrap by the post. I think I shall reserve it till Tuesday. If I have then nothing to add, as is probable, you must content yourself with my good intentions, as you, I hope, will with this speculative campaign. Pray, for the future, remain at home, and build bridges: I wish you were here to expedite ours to Richmond, which they tell me will not be passable these two years. I have done looking so forward. Adieu!

1545. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, July 10, 1774.

The month is come round, and I have, besides, a letter of yours to answer; and yet if I was not as regular as a husband or a merchant in paying my just dues, I think I should not perform the function, for I certainly have no natural call to it at present. Nothing in yours requires a response, and I have nothing new to tell you. Yet, if

[4] During the illness of his nephew, Lord Orford. *Walpole.*

one once breaks in upon punctuality, adieu to it! I will not give out, after a perseverance of three-and-thirty years; and so far I will not resemble a husband.

The whole blood royal of France is recovered from the small-pox. Both Choiseul and Broglio are recalled, and I have some idea that even the old Parliament will be so. The King is adored, and a most beautiful compliment has been paid to him: somebody wrote under the statue of Henri Quatre, *Resurrexit.*

Lord Holland is at last dead, and Lady Holland is at the point of death. His sons would still be in good circumstances, if they were not *his* sons; but he had so totally spoiled the two eldest, that they would think themselves bigots if they were to have common sense. The prevailing style is not to reform, though Lord Lyttelton pretends to have set the example. Gaming, for the last month, has exceeded its own outdoings, though the town is very empty. It will be quite so to-morrow, for Newmarket begins, or rather the youth adjourn thither. After that they will have two or three months of repose; but if they are not severely blooded and blistered, there will be no alteration. Their pleasures are no more entertaining to others than delightful to themselves; one is tired of asking every day who has won or lost? and even the portentous sums they lose cease to make impression. One of them has committed a murder, and intends to repeat it. He betted 1,500*l.* that a man could live twelve hours under water; hired a desperate fellow, sunk him in a ship, by way of experiment, and both ship and man have not appeared since. Another man and ship are to be tried for their lives, instead of Mr. Blake, the assassin.

Christina, Duchess of Kingston, is arrived, in a great fright, I believe, for the Duke's nephews are going to prove her first marriage, and hope to set the will aside. It is

a pity her friendship with the Pope had not begun earlier; he might have given her a dispensation. If she loses her cause, the best thing he can do will be to give her the veil.

I am sorry all Europe will not furnish me with another paragraph. Africa is, indeed, coming into fashion. There is just returned a Mr. Bruce[1], who has lived three years in the court of Abyssinia, and breakfasted every morning with the Maids of Honour on live oxen. Otaheite and Mr. Banks are quite forgotten; but Mr. Blake[2], I suppose, will order a live sheep for supper at Almack's, and ask whom he shall help to a piece of the shoulder. Oh yes; we shall have negro butchers, and French cooks will be laid aside. My Lady Townshend, after the Rebellion, said everybody was so bloodthirsty, that she did not dare to dine abroad, for fear of meeting with a rebel-pie—now one shall be asked to come and eat a bit of raw mutton. In truth, I do think we are ripe for any extravagance. I am not wise enough to wish the world reasonable—I only desire to have follies that are amusing, and am sorry Cervantes laughed chivalry out of fashion. Adieu!

1546. To the Rev. William Mason.

Strawberry Hill, July 19, 1774.

I send you by the Fraser-Mercury the Itinerary of Mr. Gray with my manuscript additions. I don't know whether I have made them too long or too short, but as you are entirely at liberty to curtail or lengthen, or omit such as you disapprove, it does not signify what they are. They have indeed a fault I cannot mend, unless by time, and which yet I probably shall not mend: I mean they are

Letter 1545. — [1] James Bruce (1730–1794), the traveller. [2] Who betted on the man's living under water twelve hours. *Walpole.*

not complete; for there are some considerable places that I never saw, and I am grown too lazy, since I can walk but little, to think of visiting them now.

I shall take care how I wish earnestly again for your coming southward: you gave me so little of your time and was so much in request, that I was only tantalized. I like your fixed stars that one can pore at when one pleases; but there is such a fuss with you comets, that even women and children must know all about them.

I know nothing but that we have deplorable weather; the sun, like you, has called but once at Strawberry. To make amends, the cold has brought on the winter fruits so fast, that I had a codlin tart to-day, and expect pears and apples ripe before peaches and nectarines. I wish we had never imported those southern delicacies, unless we had brought their climate over too. We should have been very happy with our hips and haws, and rainy days, and *called it luxury*. I cannot afford to have hothouses, and glass-houses, and acres of tanner's bark, as every tradesman has at his villa, or at his mistress's villa. I kill my own strawberries and cream, and can aim no higher.

Do you know that it would be charity to send me something to print, or to tell me what I shall print? My press is at a dead stand, and I would fain employ it while I may, without permission of a licencer, for though it has always been as harmless as if it was under the cannon of Sion Hill, it would be *vocal no more*, if it might only utter Dutch Bibles, or editions *in usum Delphini*[1]. I know you have twenty things in your *portefeuille*. I will print as few copies as you please. I have no ambition of serving or amusing the public, and think of nothing but diverting myself and the few I love. What signifies taking the trouble

LETTER 1546.—[1] Lady Holdernesse was a Dutchwoman, and her husband (the owner of Sion Hill) was Governor to the Prince of Wales.

to be put, I don't know how soon, into an *Index Expurgatorius*! To-day is ours; let us enjoy it.

Yours ever,
H. W.

1547. To the Rev. William Cole.

Strawberry Hill, July 21, 1774.

Your illness, dear Sir, is the worst excuse you could make me; and the worse, as you may be well in a night, if you will, by taking six grains of James's powder. He cannot cure death; but he can most complaints that are not mortal or chronical. He could cure you so soon of colds, that he would cure you of another distemper, to which I doubt you are a little subject, the fear of them. I hope you were certain that illness is a legal plea for missing induction, or you will have nursed a cough and hoarseness with too much tenderness; as they certainly could bear a journey. Never see my face again, if you are not rector of Burnham. How can you be so bigoted to *Milton*[1]? I should have thought the very name would have prejudiced you against the place, as the name is all that could approach towards reconciling me to the fens. I shall be very glad to see you here, whenever you have resolution enough to quit your cell. But since Burnham and the neighbourhood of Windsor and Eton have no charms for you, can I expect that Strawberry Hill should have any? Methinks, when one grows old, one's cotemporary friends should be our best amusement; for younger people are soon tired of us, and our old stories: but I have found the contrary in some of mine. For your part, you care for conversing with none but the dead: for I reckon the unborn, for whom you are writing, as much dead as those from whom you collect.

Letter 1547.—Dated by C. June 21.

[1] Cole was an extreme Tory.

You certainly ask no favour, dear Sir, when you want prints of me. They are at anybody's service that thinks them worth having. The owner sets very little value on them, since he sets very little indeed on himself; as a man, a very faulty one; and as an author, a very middling one: which whoever thinks a comfortable rank, is not at all of my opinion. Pray convince me that you think I mean sincerely, by not answering me with a compliment. It is very weak to be pleased with flattery; the stupidest of all delusions to beg it. From you I should take it ill. We have known one another almost fifty years—to very little purpose, indeed, if any ceremony is necessary, or downright sincerity not established between us. Only tell me that you are recovered, and that I shall see you some time or other. I have finished the Catalogue of my collection; but you shall never have it without fetching, nor, though a less punishment, the prints you desire. I propose in time to have plates of my house added to the Catalogue, yet I cannot afford them, unless by degrees. Engravers are grown so much dearer, without my growing richer, that I must have patience! a quality I seldom have, *but* when I must. Adieu! Yours ever,

H. W.

P.S. I have lately been at Ampthill, and saw Queen Katherine's cross. It is not near large enough for the situation, and would be fitter for a garden than a park: but it is executed in the truest and best taste. Lord Ossory is quite satisfied, as well as I, and designs Mr. Essex a present of some guineas. If ever I am richer, I shall consult the same honest man about building my offices, for which I have a plan: but if I have no more money ever, I will not run in debt, and distress myself; and therefore remit my designs to chance and a little economy.

1548. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, July 30, 1774.

I can satisfy few of your Ladyship's questions about Lady Holland, except by what little I heard from Mr. Crawfurd, who came hither one evening between eight and nine, and went away the moment he had breakfasted the next morning. Of her death he told me nothing. The fortune he thinks much more considerable than the family expected. This Lord Holland will have 10,000*l.* a year. Charles Fox will be entirely cleared, have his place, and 200*l.* a year, and 10,000*l.*, a pretty beginning for a younger brother, for Julius Cæsar not a breakfast. Henry[1] has 20,000*l.*, and 900*l.* a year. There is a strange legacy to Lady Sarah[2] of 200*l.*, and Mrs. Mellier[3] is forgotten. Undoubtedly poor Lady Holland knew little what she said: indeed, six hundred drops of laudanum every day could leave her very little reflection.

Lord Thomond's no-will is still more surprising, as he was persuaded he should die this year. He had had a draft of a will from his lawyer three years ago, and had not filled up the blanks. As he had taken the government of Lord Egremont's next brother[4], that boy was supposed his heir. Lord Egremont has made strict inquiry, and said he would comply literally with whatever he could learn were his uncle's instructions; but nobody can recollect the smallest hint. They say Lord Egremont was his favourite, and I believe he chose this way of heaping everything on the head of the Wyndhams.

Letter 1548.—[1] Henry Fox, Lord Holland's youngest son.

[2] Lady Sarah Bunbury, sister of Lady Holland.

[3] Mrs. Melliar's maiden name was Cheeke. She had formerly been companion to Lady Ilchester and to Lady Holland.

[4] Hon. Percy Charles Wyndham, second son of second Earl of Egremont.

Pray, Madam, tell the Duchess of Bedford how sensible I am of her goodness. I am thoroughly so of the merits of the whole Fitzpatrickhood, but it is very hard to set me on thrumming a lyre like an old blind harper when you have such a cygnet amongst you as Mr. Richard[5]. I shall certainly let him know immediately how glad I shall be to see him, if he will bring his own company with him, or I can assemble any he would like; but do not think I will punish him with a *tête-à-tête*, and my stories of the last age. Nothing upon earth is so insipid as my life to anybody but myself. For example, how do you think, Madam, he would have found me employed if he had called yesterday? Writing the history of Twickenham, and surrounded with books of peerages to find out who an ancient Lady Westmoreland[6] was that lived in the back lane here. Think of my joy when I discovered that she was sister of Grammont's Lady Shrewsbury[7], and aunt of Myra[8], of the first Duchess of Richmond[9], and of a Lady Molyneux[10], who was a toast of the Kit Cat Club, and died smoking a pipe! Judge how much Mr. Fitzpatrick would be amused with such game!

There is little probability of my accompanying Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer to Paris. I am within two months of my biennial fit of the gout, and for the last four days have been alarmed with symptoms of it, as great

[5] Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick.

[6] Lady Dorothy Brudenell, youngest daughter of second Earl of Cardigan; m. (1) Charles Fane, third Earl of Westmorland; (2) Robert Constable, third Viscount Dunbar; d. 1740.

[7] Lady Anna Maria Brudenell, m. (1) Francis Talbot, eleventh Earl of Shrewsbury; (2) George Rodney Bridges; d. 1702.

[8] Hon. Frances Brudenell, m. (1) Charles Livingston, second Earl of Newburgh; (2) Richard Bellew, third Baron Bellew of Duleek; (3) Sir Thomas Smythe. She was celebrated as 'Myra' by Lord Lansdowne and by Dr. William King (nephew of her third husband) in a mock-heroic poem called *The Toast*.

[9] Hon. Anne Brudenell, m. (1) Henry Belasyse, second Baron Belasyse of Worlaby; (2) Charles Lenox, first Duke of Richmond; d. 1722.

[10] Hon. Mary Brudenell (d. 1765), m. (1) Richard Molyneux, third Viscount Molyneux; (2) Captain Peter Osborne. These ladies were daughters of Francis Brudenell, Lord Brudenell, eldest son of second Earl of Cardigan, whom he predeceased.

nervousness and feverish pains flying about me. It would be more prudent to go to Bath, or to the seaside: I detest the first, and do not know how to amuse myself at the second. In truth I am not very ill, for I slept last night from half an hour past twelve till nine; but my dread of the gout is incredible, and of having it anywhere but at home still greater, so that unless I have a slight fit soon, I shall not have courage for a long journey, though I have curiosity to peep at the new reign. I have been charmingly interrupted; Mr. Fitzpatrick has been here two hours; I told him what I had said to your Ladyship, and sent him back with his pocket stuffed with books, but such as he may read when his servant is curling his hair. One was a collection of ballads in Queen Anne's time! I hope they will put him in tune. Now for the court of France. Monsieur de Boynes, a rising genius in the last ministry, is turned out, and a Monsieur Turgot[11] made Secretary of State for the Marine in his room, a friend of Maurepas. The Duke of Orléans and the Duke of Chartres are forbidden the court for refusing to assist at the catafalque of the late King, when they must have saluted the Parliament, whom they will not acknowledge—however, this rod is supposed to be laid on only in ceremony, and my letters bid me not conclude thence that the new Parliament will be maintained; accordingly I conclude it will not. My faith about things indifferent is pretty obedient, and may be led like a child. Consequently I would not for the world have a table of *trou-madame*[12], without a king and a queen: I should detest a republican table, and wish

[11] Anne Robert Jacques Turgot (1727–1781), Baron de l'Aune. He became Contrôleur Général des Finances in August 1774. His career as a financial reformer was put a stop to by the clamours of those who objected to his plans for the abolition of pensions and useless offices. He was dismissed by Louis XVI in 1776.

[12] 'Sorte de jeu formé de plusieurs arcades numerotées qu'on cherche à enfiler avec des petites boules d'ivoire.' (Larousse.)

I could have one cut out of the same log of wood with your Ladyship's for the sake of the hereditary line.

Let me beseech you if it thunders to go into the cellar, and say the collect about bad weather. I could not bear another disappointment in the right line, and am not indifferent to that succession, but beg my *trou-madame* may have a king as well as a queen.

1549. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, Aug. 3, 1774.

I TOLD you in my last that her Grace of Kingston was arrived. Had I written it four-and-twenty hours later, I might have told you she was gone again, with much precipitation, and with none of the pomp of her usual progresses. In short, she had missed her lawyer's letters, which warned her against returning. A prosecution for bigamy was ready to meet her. She decamped in the middle of the night; and six hours after the officers of justice were at her door to seize her. This is but an unheroic catastrophe of her romance; and though she is as thorough a comedian as Sixtus Quintus, it would be a little awkward to take possession of his villa, after being burnt in the hand. What will be the issue of the suit and lawsuit I cannot tell. As so vast an estate is the prize, the lawyers will probably protract it beyond this century. Her friend the Electress of Saxony[1] said to the Duke of Gloucester, 'Poor thing! what could she do; she was so young when she was first married?'

Lady Holland is dead—just three weeks after her Lord. She has cleared all the debts of her two elder sons; the eldest has a large fortune, and Charles a decent beginning

LETTER 1549.—[1] Maria Antonia of Bavaria, wife of the Elector Frederick Augustus III of Saxony.

of another; though it may not last a night, if he chooses to make it a codicil to all he has lost, and scorns to be indebted to anything but his own parts for his elevation.

Lord Thomond[2] is dead too; and though possessed of near ten thousand a year, and fifty thousand in money, nay, though he has long expected to die suddenly, and at the same age with his grandfather, father, and brother, as he has done, he could not bring himself to make a will, and the whole real estate falls to his nephew, Lord Egremont.

These are all the events of this inactive summer; and I chose this small paper, as abundantly large enough to contain them. Nay, I do not see how I shall reach its third page.

I find that in France they are persuaded the old Parliament will be restored. The Dukes of Orléans and Chartres are again forbidden the court for refusing to assist at the catafalque of the late King, where they must have saluted the new Parliament: yet this is not thought a disgrace. Monsieur de Boines is removed for a Monsieur Turgot. I see, however, that the old spirit remains at least in one quarter, and that they continue butchering the poor Corsicans. Is it true that the King of Sardinia is to have that island? How unfortunate it is that little countries should retain a spirit of independence, which they have not strength to preserve; and that great nations, who might throw it off, court the yoke!

4th.

Oh, my dear Sir, what a heartfelt pleasure I have had this moment! I have been to Mr. Croft's to see your picture. It brought the tears into my eyes; though thirty years have fattened you, made you florid, I traced every feature, and saw the whole likeness in the character and

[2] Percy Windham O'Brien, Earl of Thomond, second son of Sir William Windham, and younger brother of Charles, Earl of Egremont. *Walpole.*

countenance—yes, there is all your goodness. I admire the art of the painter too; there is harmony in the tone, and though he has given you an Adonis-wig, which grave we should not think adapted to your age, he has managed it so as to have no juvenile air, but to harmonize in the utmost propriety with the decency of the ministerial composure. In short, as I did once before, I wanted to seize it for my own—but no! it will go to Linton[3], and I hope remain there for ages—which would not, I suppose, be its fate at Strawberry; that poor bauble will probably be condemned and pulled to pieces by whomever I shall give it to. Our living deeds create no gratitude; can we expect our affection expressed in a last will should make stronger impressions?

Mr. Croft showed me a letter from you on Birmingham covers for dishes. He has written, but received no answer. I told him I would advise you against them. All plated silver wears abominably, and turns to brass, like the age. You would not bear it six months. He told me that your nephew Horace is on the road to you: how glad I am! what joy to embrace dear Gal's son! I think I have seen too many bad hearts in the countenance, not to know when I see a good one; yes, yes, you will find Gal and yourself in your nephew. I am as sure there is goodness in his heart, as I am that there is sense in his head, and quickness in his parts. I was charmed with him last year; and don't fancy it is partiality if you think so too the first minute you see him. Certain characters strike fire from each other.

The King of Prussia has been amazingly gracious to General Conway, and ordered him to attend him to all his reviews. This is most astonishing favour to an Englishman. For my part, I am sorry; I had rather such virtue

[3] The seat of the Manns in Kent.

had been marked by his frown. 'There are many Marius's in that Cæsar,' a quotation you will not suspect me of intending for a compliment! Adieu! How I love your picture! Tell me who painted it. I am sure not the one-eyed German who drew Madame Griffoni like a surly Margravine.

1550. To George Augustus Selwyn.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday, Aug. 10th, at night.

I think I shall be with you[1] on Saturday; at least, I know that I intend to set out to-morrow, and lie at Park Place. But it is so formidable to me to begin a journey, and I have changed my mind so often about this, though I like it so much, that I beg you will not be disappointed if you do not see me. If I were juvenile enough to set off at midnight, and travel all night, you would be sure of me; but folks who do anything eagerly neither know nor care what they do. Sedate me, who deliberate, at least do not determine but on preference; therefore, if I surmount difficulties, I shall at least have some merit with you; and, if I do not, you must allow that the difficulties were prodigious, when they surmounted so much inclination.

In this wavering situation I wish you good night, and hope I shall wake to-morrow as resolute as Hercules or Mr. Bruce. But pray do not give me live-beef for supper.

Yours ever,

H. W.

Letter 1550.—[1] At Matson, George Selwyn's seat near Gloucester.

1551. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Thursday, Aug. 11, 1774.

Though my chaise is at the door, and the wind and tide fair, I cannot receive a line from you, Madam, to tell me so kindly you are well, without stopping a minute to answer it. I am disappointed, I am vexed, but I am happy you are so soon in spirits again. Don't trust to your strength, nor your health, which is the only way to keep both. Don't be brave this month: the weather is already much cooler, and you need not catch cold to prove how intolerable the heat is. I don't design to acknowledge Anne III; I shall call her *Madame de Trop*, as they named one of the late King of France's daughters. A *dauphin*! a *dauphin*! I will repeat it as often as the *Graces*. Apropos, Mr. Cambridge came yesterday and said he must ask to see something I had lately written. I had kept it a profound secret, but concluded Garrick had told him of the verses[1], and that it was vain to deny them. Well, I produced them. He stared, was civil about them, and said he was glad he had got them into the bargain, for he had not heard of them, but meant the parody of Lord Chesterfield's Letters[2], which was quite out of my head. I was horridly out of countenance, and to rap my own fingers for my blunder, would not show him what he wanted. This comes of your Ladyship's flattering me!

One may weed and weed one's heart, but if a grain of that devil, vanity, lights on it, it springs up till it chokes one. You have no notion how vexed I was at my own folly —a boy-poet would scarce have been caught so! It is in vain to say, 'The woman gave me, and I did eat.'

Adieu! my Eve; as angry as I am, I wish you no worse

Letter 1551.—[1] Horace Walpole's verses on *The Three Vernons*. [2] See *Works* of Lord Orford, vol. iv. p. 355.

punishment than hers, and I hope it will fall on you before eleven months are over.

1552. To the Rev. William Cole.

Dear Sir, Matson, near Gloucester, Aug. 15, 1774.

As I am your disciple in antiquities, for you studied them when I was but a scoffer, I think it my duty to give you some account of my journeyings in the good cause. You will not dislike my date: I am in the very mansion where King Charles the First and his two eldest sons lay during the siege, and there are marks of the last's hacking with his hanger on a window, as he told Mr. Selwyn's grandfather afterwards. The present master has done due honour to the royal residence, and erected a good marble bust of the martyr in a little gallery. In a window is a shield in painted glass, with that King's and his Queen's arms, which I gave him.—So you see I am not a rebel, when *alma mater* antiquity stands godmother.

I went again to the cathedral, and, on seeing the monument of Edward II, a new *historic doubt* started, which I pray you to solve. His Majesty has a longish beard, and such were certainly worn at that time. Who is the *first* historian that tells the story of his being shaven with cold water from a ditch, and weeping to supply warm, as he was carried to Berkeley Castle? Is not this apocryphal? The house whence Bishop Hooper was carried to the stake is still standing *tale quale*. I made a visit to his actual successor, Warburton, who is very infirm, speaks with much hesitation, and, they say, begins to lose his memory. They have destroyed the beautiful cross; the two battered heads of Henry III and Edward III are in the postmaster's garden.

Yesterday I made a jaunt four miles hence that pleased

me exceedingly, to Prinknash[1], the individual villa of the abbots of Gloucester—I wished you there with their mitre on. It stands on a glorious but impracticable hill, in the midst of a little forest of beech, and commanding Elysium. The house is small, but has good rooms, and though modernized here and there, not extravagantly. On the ceiling of the hall is Edward IVth's jovial device, a *faucon serrure.* The chapel is low and small, but antique, and with painted glass, with many angels in their coronation robes, i.e. wings and crowns. Henry VIII and Jane Seymour lay here; in the dining-room are their arms in glass, and of Catherine of Arragon, and of Bray and Bridges. Under a window, a barbarous bas-relief head of Harry, young; as it is still on a sign at an ale-house, on the descent of the hill. Think of my amazement, when they showed me the chapel plate, and I found on it, on four pieces, my own arms, quartering my mother-in-law Skerret's, and in a shield of pretence, those of Fortescue, certainly by mistake for those of my sister-in-law, as the barony of Clinton was in abeyance between her and Fortescue Lord Clinton[2]. The whole is modern and blundered, for Skerret should be impaled, not quartered, and instead of our crest, are two spears tied together in a ducal coronet, and no coronet for my brother, in whose time this plate must have been made, and at whose sale it was probably bought, as he finished the repairs of the church at Houghton, for which, I suppose, this decoration was intended—but the silversmith was no herald, you see.

As I descended the hill, I found in a wretched cottage a child in an ancient oaken cradle, exactly in the form of that lately published from the cradle of Edward II—I purchased it for five shillings, but don't know whether I shall

LETTER 1552.—[1] Near Painswick.
[2] See Table I.

have fortitude enough to transport it to Strawberry Hill—people would conclude me in my second childhood.

To-day I have been at Berkeley and Thornbury Castles. The first disappointed me much, though very entire. It is much smaller than I expected, but very entire, except a small part burnt two years ago, while the present Earl was in the house. The fire began in the housekeeper's room, who never appeared more; but as she was strict over the servants, and not a bone of her was found, it was supposed that she was murdered, and the body conveyed away. The situation is not elevated nor beautiful, and little improvements made of late, but some silly ones *à la chinoise* by the present Dowager[3]. In good sooth, I can give you but a very imperfect account, for instead of the Lord's being gone to dine with the Mayor of Gloucester, as I expected, I found him in the midst of all his captains of the militia. I am so sillily shy of strangers and youngsters, that I hurried through the chambers, and looked for nothing but the way out of every room. I just observed that there were many bad portraits of the family, but none ancient, as if the Berkeleys had been commissaries, and raised themselves in the last war. There is a plentiful addition of those of Lord Berkeley of Stratton; but no Knights Templars, or barons as old as Edward I. Yet are there three beds on which there may have been as frisky doings three centuries ago, as there probably have been within these ten years. The room shown for the murder of Edward II, and the 'shrieks of an agonizing King[4],' I verily believe to be genuine. It is a dismal chamber, almost at top of the house, quite detached, and to be approached only by a kind of footbridge, and from that descends a large flight of steps that

[3] The Dowager Countess of Berkeley married secondly Robert (afterwards Earl) Nugent.

[4] See *The Bard*:—

'The shrieks of death, thro' Berkeley's roofs that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing King!'

terminate on strong gates; exactly a situation for a *corps de garde*. In that room they show you a cast of a face in plaster, and tell you it was taken from Edward's. I was not quite so easy of faith about that, for it is evidently the face of Charles I. The steeple of the church, lately rebuilt handsomely, stands some paces from the body: in the latter are three tombs of the old Berkeleys, with cumbent figures. The wife of the Lord Berkeley[5] who was supposed to be privy to the murder has a curious headgear: it is like a long horseshoe, quilted in quaterfoils, and, like Lord Foppington's wig, allows no more than the breadth of a half-crown to be discovered of the face. Stay, I think I mistake; the husband was a conspirator against Richard II, not Edward; but in those days loyalty was not so rife as at present.

From Berkeley Castle I went to Thornbury[6], of which the ruins are half ruined. It would have been glorious, if finished—I wish the Lords of Berkeley had retained the spirit of deposing till Harry the VIIIth's time! The situation is fine, though that was not the fashion, for all the windows of the great apartment look into the inner court—the prospect was left to the servants. Here I had two adventures. I could find nobody to show me about. I saw a paltry house that I took for the sexton's, at the corner of the close, and bade my servant ring and ask who could show me the castle. A voice in a passion flew from a casement, and issued from a divine—'What! was it *his* business to show the castle? Go look for somebody else! What did the fellow ring for, as if the house was on fire?'

[5] Thomas Berkeley (d. 1361), eighth Baron Berkeley. The effigy is that of his second wife, Catherine Clivedon, widow of Sir Peter le Veel. Lord Berkeley figured in the reigns of Edward II and III. He died before the accession of Richard II.

[6] The remains of a castle begun by Edward Stafford (1478–1521), third Duke of Buckingham, executed for high treason in the reign of Henry VIII.

The poor Swiss came back in a fright, and said the doctor had sworn at him. Well! we scrambled over a stone stile, saw a room or two glazed near the gate, and rung at it. A damsel came forth, and satisfied our curiosity. When we had done seeing, I said, 'Child, we don't know our way, and want to be directed into the London road: I see the Duke's[7] steward yonder at the window; pray desire him to come to me, that I may consult him.' She went, he stood staring at us at the window—and sent his footman. I do not think courtesy is resident at Thornbury. As I returned through the close, the divine came running out of breath, and without his beaver or bands, and calls out, 'Sir, I am come to justify myself; your servant says I swore at him, I am no swearer—Lord bless me! (dropping his voice) is it Mr. Walpole?' 'Yes, Sir, and I think you was Lord Beauchamp's tutor at Oxford, but I have forgot your name.'—'Holwell[8], Sir.' 'Oh yes——' and then I comforted him, and laid the ill-breeding on my footman's being a foreigner, but could not help saying, I really had taken his house for the sexton's.—'Yes, Sir, it is not very good without, won't you please to walk in?' I did, and found the inside ten times worse, and a lean wife, suckling a child. He was making an index to Homer, is going to publish the chief beauties, and I believe had just been reading some of the delicate civilities that pass between Agamemnon and Achilles, and that what my servant took for oaths were only Greek compliments. Adieu! You see I have not a line more of paper.

Yours ever,

H. W.

[7] The Duke of Norfolk, who bought the castle and manor of Thornbury from the fourth Earl of Stafford.

[8] Rev. William Holwell (1726–1798). He published *The Beauties of Homer, selected from the Iliad*, in 1775.

1553. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 18, 1774.

It is very hard, that because you do not get my letters, you will not let me receive yours, who do receive them. I have not had a line from you these five weeks. Of your honours and glories fame has told me[1]; and for aught I know, you may be a *veldt-marshal* by this time, and despise such a poor cottager as me. Take notice, I shall disclaim you in my turn, if you are sent on a command against Dantzic, or to usurp a new district in Poland.

I have seen no armies, kings, or empresses, and cannot send you such august gazettes; nor are they what I want to hear of. I like to hear you are well and diverted; nay, have pimped towards the latter, by desiring Lady Ailesbury to send you Monsieur de Guisnes's invitation to a military fête at Metz[2]. For my part, I wish you was returned to your plough. Your Sabine farm[3] is in high beauty. I have lain there twice within this week, going to and from a visit to George Selwyn, near Gloucester: a tour as much to my taste as yours to you. For fortified towns I have seen ruined castles. Unluckily, in that of Berkeley I found a whole regiment of militia in garrison, and as many young officers as if the Countess[4] was in possession, and ready to surrender at indiscretion. I endeavoured to comfort myself by figuring that they were guarding Edward II. I have seen many other ancient sights without asking leave of the King of Prussia: it would not please me so much to write *to* him, as it once did to write *for* him[5].

Letter 1553.—[1] Alluding to the distinguished notice taken of General Conway by the King of Prussia. *Walpole.*

[2] To see the review of the French regiment of Carabineers, then commanded by Monsieur de Guines. *Walpole.*

[3] Park Place. *Walpole.*

[4] The Countess of Berkeley.

[5] Alluding to the letter to Rousseau in the name of the King of Prussia. *Walpole.*

They have found at least seventy thousand pounds of Lord Thomond's[6]. George Howard[7] has decked himself with a red riband, money, and honours! Charming things! and yet one may be very happy without them.

The young Mr. Coke[8] is returned from his travels in love with the Pretender's queen[9], who has permitted him to have her picture. What can I tell you more? Nothing. Indeed, if I only write to postmasters, my letter is long enough. Everybody's head but mine is full of elections. I had the satisfaction at Gloucester, where George Selwyn is canvassing, of reflecting on my own wisdom. *Suave mari magno turbantibus aequora ventis*, &c. I am certainly the greatest philosopher in the world, without ever having thought of being so: always employed, and never busy: eager about trifles, and indifferent to everything serious. Well, if it is not philosophy, at least it is content. I am as pleased here with my own nutshell, as any monarch you have seen these two months astride his eagle—not but I was dissatisfied when I missed you at Park Place, and was peevish at your being in an Aulic chamber. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P.S. They tell us from Vienna that the peace is made between Tisiphone and the Turk: is it true[10]?

[6] Percy Wyndham O'Brien. He was the second son of Sir William Wyndham, the Chancellor of the Exchequer to Queen Anne, and took the name of O'Brien pursuant to the will of his uncle the Earl of Thomond in Ireland. *Walpole.*

[7] Lieutenant-General Sir George Howard (d. 1796), of the family of the Earls of Effingham, Governor of Chelsea Hospital; Field Marshal, 1793.

[8] Thomas William Coke (1754–1842), created Earl of Leicester in 1837.

[9] The Countess of Albany.

[10] Peace between the Turks and Russians was signed on July 21, 1774.

1554. To the Rev. William Mason.

Excuse me, but I cannot take your advice, nor intend to print any more for the public. When I offer you my press it is most selfishly, and to possess your writings, for I would only print a few copies for your friends and mine. My last volume of the *Anecdotes of Painting* has long been finished, and as a debt shall some time or other be published, but there I take my leave of Messieurs the readers. Let Dr. Johnson please this age with the fustian of his style, and the meanness of his spirit; both are good and great enough for the taste and practice predominant. I think this country sinking fast into ruin; and when it is become an absolute monarchy and thence insignificant, I do not desire to be remembered by slaves, and in a French province. I would not be Virgil or Boileau on such conditions. Present amusement is all my object in reading, writing, or printing. To gratify the first especially, I wish to see your poem finished:

> You, who erewhile the happy garden sung,

continue to

> sing
> Recovered Paradise!

I am less impatient for Gray's Life, being sure of seeing it, whether published or not: and as I conclude neither his letters nor Latin poems will be admired to the height they deserve, I am jealous of his fame, and do not like its being cast before swine. In short, I wish his and your writings to meet with a fate that not many years ago was reckoned an ignominy, that they may be sent to the colonies! for

> Arts and sciences will travel west

and

> The sad Nine in Britain's evil hour

will embark for America.

I have been in Gloucestershire, and can add a little to the catalogue, having seen Berkeley Castle, Thornbury Castle, and a charming small old house of the abbots of Gloucester. Indeed I could not enjoy the first, for the Earl was in it with all his militia, and dispelled visions. To Wentworth Castle I shall certainly make no visit this year. If I went any journey it would be to Paris; but indolence persisting in her apprehensions of the gout, though I have had no symptoms of it for some time, will fix me here and hereabouts. I discover charms in idleness that I never had a notion of before, and perceive that age brings pleasures as well as takes away. There is a serenity in having nothing to do, that is delicious: I am persuaded that little princes assumed the title of Serene Highness from that sensation.

Your assured friend,

HORACE LE FAINÉANT.

Given at our Castle of Nonsuch, Aug. 23, 1774.

Salute our trusty and well-beloved the Palsgrave[1] on our part.

1555. To THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Monday night, Aug. 23, 1774.

YOUR Ladyship's letter did not arrive till I was gone to Goodwood, and sat here quietly till I returned to-night, for as my voyages and travels are seldom longer than a parenthesis, I never oblige my dispatches to follow me. Though you do not ask, I am sure you wish to know what I heard of the Duchess of Leinster[1]. Not a word was mentioned. Last night the Duke received a letter to tell him

LETTER 1554.—[1] Mason's friend, the Rev. William Palgrave.

LETTER 1555.—[1] Emilia Lennox, widow of the first Duke of Leinster, married secondly (about this time) William Ogilvie, her sons' tutor. The match was strongly disapproved of by her family.

his niece[2] is married to Lord Bellamont. Lady A.[3] asked the Duchess of R.[4] about the mother. She said they had heard the report, but did not believe it; and indeed they were all in such good spirits, that I cannot think they give any credit to the marriage.

I saw charming Lady Sarah[5], who is a little fatter, but as fresh and beautiful as ever: her little girl is sweetly pretty and lively. We had much billiards, music, loo, and company; I could take no part in the two first; I love most of the last, that I know, and as there were two or three children, and two- or three-and-forty dogs, I could not want amusement, for I generally prefer both to what the common people call *Christians*.

I like all the account you give me, Madam, but of your nerves, and of those I don't at all despair. When Madame de Trop[6] ceases to be the youngest of your race, I dare to say I shall love her, especially when Lady Anne begins to love her less than her brother; but, remember, a brother is the *sine quâ non* of my reconciliation.

I don't pretend to call this a letter, it is only a note, I know; but what can I tell you, Madam, from country-houses? or is anything so bad as a letter when one has really no news, and nothing particular to say?

P.S. I had sealed my letter, but open it again that your

[2] Lady Emilia Maria Margaret Fitzgerald, eldest daughter of first Duke of Leinster; m. (Aug. 20, 1774) Charles Coote, first Earl of Bellamont.

[3] The Countess of Ailesbury.

[4] The Duchess of Richmond, sister-in-law of the Duchess of Leinster.

[5] Lady Sarah Bunbury was separated from her husband, from whom she eloped in 1769 with Lord William Gordon. She was divorced from Sir Charles Bunbury in 1776. She was at this time living in retirement at Goodwood, where her brother, the Duke of Richmond, built her a small house in the park, called Halnaker. The daughter mentioned above bore the surname of Bunbury, although she was not the child of Sir Charles Bunbury. She died of consumption, unmarried, in 1785, four years after Lady Sarah's marriage to Hon. George Napier.

[6] Lady Gertrude Fitzpatrick (born in August 1774), the youngest of Lord Ossory's two daughters. She died unmarried in 1841.

Ladyship may have the freshest intelligence of the following great news—very important, at least, to my friends in France. In a postscript [7] I have just received are these words:—

'Choses nouvelles et très certaines, M. Terray est exilé à la Motte. M. Turgot a les Finances. M. de Sartine la Marine. La Police n'est point donnée. M. le Chancelier [8] est exilé pour trois jours à la Bruière, au bout desquels trois jours il a ordre d'aller dans une de ses terres beaucoup plus éloignées. M. de Miromenil [9], ci-devant Premier Président de Rouen, est Garde des Sceaux, et Vice-Chancelier.'—I am going to make a French bonfire.

1556. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 2, 1774.

You think I write seldom, my dear Sir, but how can I help it? Not seldomer, I hope, than in other peaceful summers. In vacations of London and Parliament, little happens weighty enough to bear so long a journey. This season has been singularly barren. Perhaps events may thicken, which, prosperous or not, are equally propitious to correspondences. The scene in America, they say, grows very gloomy; Cæsar [1] frowns on the Elector of Hanover; but I know neither Atlantic nor German politics. *You* tell me what the Turks and Russians are to do next, but before I received your letter, I could have told you that they have agreed to do nothing more—which is much about what they have been doing all the war. Well, still one has something to live upon. The King of France has at last spoken out; both the Chancellor and Terray [2] are banished, and the old

[7] See letter of Madame du Deffand to Horace Walpole of Aug. 24, 1774.

[8] Maupeou.

[9] Armand Thomas Hue de Miromesnil (1723–1796).

Letter 1556.—[1] The Emperor disagreeing with the King on German politics. *Walpole.*

[2] The Abbé Terray, Comptroller-General of the Finances. *Walpole.*

Parliament restored, or to be restored. As little as I care about the revolutions of the great planets, I am mightily pleased with this convulsion. I like old constitutions recovering themselves; and I abhorred the Chancellor, a consummate villain, who would have served Alexander VI and Cæsar Borgia too, and wished no better than to have restored St. Ignatius and St. Nero. This young King is exceedingly in my good graces; and may gain my whole heart whenever he pleases, if he will but release Madame du Barri, for, though the tool of a vile faction, I would not be angry with a street-walker; nor make no difference between Thais and Frédégonde; between Con Phillips[3] and the Czarina.

By the way, one hears no more of my friend Pugatscheff; yet perhaps he contributed to this peace. It is now part of my plan that the King of France should dethrone that woman, and their Majesties of Prussia and Sweden, and restore Corsica—not to the Genoese, but to themselves. You may think all this a great deal, but it is not a quarter so difficult as conquering oneself, and relinquishing despotism. It is a greater victory to make happy than miserable; but then what glorious rewards! Think, how contemptible the end of Louis the Well-beloved, how bright the dawn of Louis XVI! Can any power taste so sweet as this single word on the statue of Henri Quatre, *Resurrexit*? And then, what a blessed retirement the Chancellor's! How he must enjoy himself, when the loss of power is sweetened with the curses of a whole nation, who have not cursed him in vain! My whole heart makes a bonfire on this occasion. What a century, which sees the Jesuits annihilated, and absolute power relinquished! I begin to believe in the millennium, when the just shall reign on earth. I scorn to say a word more, or profane such a subject with heathen topics. Adieu!

[3] Teresia Constantia Phillips (d. 1765), a notorious and disreputable personage, who published an *Apology* for her conduct in 1748.

P.S. My affection for your concerns betrays me into a weakness; I cannot help being so irreligious as to tell you that you are to have a new neighbour, though not very soon; Lord Carlisle is to succeed Mr. Lynch at Turin[4].

1557. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 7, 1774.

I did not think you had been so like the rest of the world, as, when you pretended to be visiting armies, to go in search of gold and silver mines[1]! The favours of courts and the smiles of emperors and kings, I see, have corrupted even you, and perverted you to a nabob. Have you brought away an ingot in the calf of your leg? What abomination have you committed? All the gazettes in Europe have sent you on different negotiations: instead of returning with a treaty in your pocket, you will only come back with bills of exchange. I don't envy your subterraneous travels, nor the hospitality of the Hungarians. Where did you find a spoonful of Latin about you? I have not attempted to speak Latin these thirty years, without perceiving I was talking Italian thickened with terminations in *us* and *orum*. I should have as little expected to find an Ovid in those regions; but I suppose the gentry of Presburg read him for a fashionable author, as our 'squires and their wives do the last collections of ballads that have been sung at Vauxhall and Marybone. I wish you may have brought away some sketches of Duke Albert's[2] architecture. You know I deal in the works of royal authors, though I have never admired any of their own buildings, not excepting King Solomon's

[4] This report proved untrue.

Letter 1557.—[1] Mr. Conway had gone to see the gold and silver mines of Cremnitz, in the neighbourhood of Gran in Hungary. *Walpole.*

[2] Probably Albert, Duke of Saxe-Teschen, son-in-law of the Empress Maria Theresa.

Temple. Stanley[3] and Edmondson in Hungary! What carried them thither? The chase of mines, too? The first, perhaps, waddled thither obliquely, as a parrot would have done whose direction was to Naples.

Well, I am glad you have been entertained, and seen such a variety of sights. You don't mind fatigues and hardships, and hospitality, the two extremes that to me poison travelling. I shall never see anything more, unless I meet with a ring that renders one invisible. It was but the other day that, being with George Selwyn at Gloucester, I went to view Berkeley Castle, knowing the Earl was to dine with the Mayor of Gloucester. Alas! when I arrived, he had put off the party to enjoy his militia a day longer, and the house was full of officers. They might be in the Hungarian dress, for aught I knew; for I was so dismayed, that I would fain have persuaded the housekeeper that she could not show me the apartments; and when she opened the hall, and I saw it full of captains, I hid myself in a dark passage, and nothing could persuade me to enter, till they had the civility to quit the place. When I was forced at last to go over the castle, I ran through it without seeing anything, as if I had been afraid of being detained prisoner.

I have no news to send you: if I had any, I would not conclude, as all correspondents do, that Lady Ailesbury left nothing untold. Lady Powis is gone to hold mobs at Ludlow, where there is actual war, and where a *knight*, I forget his name, one of their friends, has been *almost cut in two* with a scythe. When you have seen all the other armies in Europe, you will be just in time for many election-battles—perhaps, for a war in America, whither more troops are going. Many of those already sent have deserted; and to be sure the prospect there is not smiling. Apropos, Lord

[3] Mr. Hans Stanley. *Walpole.*

Mahon[4], whom Lord Stanhope, his father, will not suffer to wear powder because wheat is so dear, was presented t'other day in coal-black hair and a white feather: they said 'he had been *tarred and feathered.*'

In France you will find a new scene[5]. The Chancellor is sent, a little before his time, to the devil. The old Parliament is expected back. I am sorry to say I shall not meet you there. It will be too late in the year for me to venture, especially as I now live in dread of my biennial gout, and should die of it in an *hôtel garni*, and forced to receive all comers—I, who you know lock myself up when I am ill as if I had the plague.

I wish I could fill my sheet, in return for your five pages. The only thing you will care for knowing is, that I never saw Mrs. Damer better in her life, nor look so well. You may trust me, who am so apt to be frightened about her.

1558. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Madam, Strawberry Hill, Sept. 14, 1774.

'Methinks an Æsop's fable you relate,' as Dryden says in *The Hind and Panther.* A mouse that wraps itself in a French cloak and sleeps on a couch; and a goldfinch that taps at the window and swears it will come in to quadrille at eleven o'clock at night! no, no, these are none of Æsop's cattle; they are too fashionable to have lived so near the Creation. The mouse is neither country mouse nor city mouse; and whatever else he may be, the goldfinch must be a Maccaroni, or at least of the *Sçavoir vivre*[1]. I do not deny but I have some skill in expounding types and portents; and could give a shrewd guess at the identical persons who have

[4] Charles Stanhope (1753–1816), Viscount Mahon; succeeded his father as third Earl Stanhope in 1786. He was noted for his Republican views, and for his interest in science.

[5] Upon the death of Louis XV. *Walpole.*

Letter 1558.—[1] A fashionable club.

travestied themselves into a quadruped and biped; but the truth is, I have no mind, Madam, to be Prime Minister. King Pharaoh is mighty apt on emergencies to send for us soothsayers, and put the whole kingdom into our hands, if his butler or baker, with whom he is wont to gossip, does but tell him of a cunning man.

I have no ambition to supplant Lord North—especially as the season approaches when I dread the gout; and I should be very sorry to be fetched out of my bed to pacify America. To be sure, Madam, you give me a fair field for uttering oracles: however, all I will unfold is, that the emblematic animals have no views on Lady Louisa[2]. The omens of her fortune are in herself; and I will burn my books, if beauty, sense, and merit do not bestow all the happiness on her they prognosticate.

I can as little agree to the Duchess of M.'s solution of the Duchess of L.'s marriage, which, by the way, is at least not over yet. Nor do I believe, *whatever mamma knows*, that she will agree to it either; and, for this reason, the efficacy of pregnancy on a delicate constitution is no lasting nostrum. A husband would be but a temporary preservative, and useless, when the operations of the remedy could not possibly be of any service. Alas! is a poor sick lady to leave off the drug when it can no longer produce the wholesome tumour on the patient!

I doubt the Duchess of M. did not advert to the vicinity of that hopeless season in the Duchess of L., or I think her Grace would not have laid down a position from which such disagreeable consequences might be drawn.

I like the blue eyes, Madam, better than the denomination of Lady Gertrude Fitzpatrick, which, all respectable as it is,

[2] Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick (d. 1789), daughter of first Earl of Upper Ossory, and sister-in-law of Horace Walpole's correspondent; m. (1779), as his second wife, William Petty, second Earl of Shelburne, who was created Marquis of Lansdowne in 1784.

is very harsh and rough sounding; pray let her change it with the first goldfinch that offers. Nay, I do not even trust to the blueth of the eyes. I do not believe they last once in twenty times. One cannot go into any village fifty miles from London without seeing a dozen little children with flaxen hair and eyes of sky-blue. What becomes of them all? One does not see a grown Christian with them twice in a century, except in poetry.

The Strawberry Gazette is very barren of news. Mr. Garrick has the gout, which is of more consequence to the metropolis than to Twitnamshire. Lady Hertford dined here last Saturday, brought her loo party, and stayed supper; there were Lady Mary Coke, Mrs. Howe, and the Colonels Maude and Keene. This was very heroic, for one is robbed every hundred yards. Lady Hertford herself was attacked last Wednesday on Hounslow Heath at three in the afternoon, but she had two servants on horseback, who would not let her be robbed, and the highwayman decamped.

The greatest event I know was a present I received last Sunday, just as I was going to dine at Lady Blandford's, to whom I sacrificed it. It was a bunch of grapes as big—as big—as that the two spies carried on a pole to Joshua; for spies in those days, when they robbed a vineyard, were not at all afraid of being overtaken. In good truth this bunch weighed three pounds and a half, *côte rôtie* measure; and was sent to me by my neighbour Prado, of the tribe of Issachar, who is descended from one of foresaid spies, but a good deal richer than his ancestor. Well, Madam, I carried it to the Marchioness, but gave it to the *maître d'hôtel*, with injunctions to conceal it till the dessert. At the end of dinner, Lady Blandford said she had heard of three immense bunches of grapes at Mr. Prado's at a dinner he had made for Mr. Ellis. I said those things were always exaggerated. She cried, Oh! but Mrs. Ellis told it, and it weighed I don't

know how many pounds, and the Duke of Argyle had been to see the hothouse, and she wondered, as it was so near, I would not go and see it. 'Not I, indeed,' said I; 'I dare to say there is no curiosity in it.' Just then entered the gigantic bunch. Everybody screamed. 'There,' said I, 'I will be shot if Mr. Prado has such a bunch as yours.' In short, she suspected Lady Egremont, and the adventure succeeded to admiration. If you will send the Bedfordshire waggon, Madam, I will beg a dozen grapes for you.

Mr. Barker may pretend what he will, but if he liked Strawberry Hill so well, he would have visited it again, and by daylight. He could see no more of it at nine o'clock at night than he does at this moment.

Pray, Madam, is not it Farming Woods'[3] tide? Who is to have the care of the dear mouse in your absence? I wish I could spare Margaret, who loves all creatures so well that she would have been happy in the ark, and sorry when the Deluge ceased; unless people had come to see Noah's old house, which she would have liked still better than cramming his menagerie.

Postscript, *entre nous*. Have you heard that certain verses have been read inadvertently to the D. of Gr.[4]? I long to know, but cannot learn who was the ingenious person.

1559. To the Rev. William Mason.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 16, 1774.

What is the commonest thing in the world?—Lord! how can you be so dull as not to guess? why to be sure, to hunt for a thing forty times, and give it over, and then find it when you did not look for it, exactly where you had hunted forty times. This happened to me this very morning,

[3] Lord Ossory's seat in Northamptonshire.

[4] The Duke of Grafton, Lady Ossory's former husband.

and overjoyed I am. I suppose you don't guess what I have found? Really, Mr. Mason, you great poets are so absent, and so unlike the rest of the world! Why what should I have found, but the thing in the world that was most worth finding? a hidden treasure—a hidden fig; no, Sir, not the certificate of the Duchess of Kingston's first marriage, nor the lost books of Livy, nor the longitude, nor the philosopher's stone, nor all Charles Fox has lost. I tell you it is what I have searched for a thousand times, and had rather have found than the longitude, if it was a thousand times longer. Oh, you do guess, do you? I thought I never lost anything in my life. I was sure I had them, and so I had; and now am I not a good soul, to sit down and send you a copy incontinently? Don't be too much obliged to me neither. I am in a panic till there are more copies than mine, and as the post does not go till to-morrow, I am in terror lest the house should be burnt to-night. I have a mind to go and bury a transcript in the field; but then if I should be burnt too! nobody would know where to look for it. Well, here it is! I think your decorum will not hold it proper to be printed in the Life, nor would I have it. We will preserve copies, and the devil is in it, if some time or other it don't find its way to the press. My copy is in his own handwriting; but who could doubt it: I know but one man upon earth who could have written it but Gray[1].

1560. To John Fenn.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 17, 1774.

I am much obliged to you, Sir, for your accurate drawing and description of your picture, and wish I could say any-

Letter 1559. — [1] The original letter ends with a copy of Gray's verses, *Jemmy Twitcher: or, the Cambridge Courtship*, and a suggestion that the coarseness of the last two lines should be modified.

Letter 1560.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. Arthur H. Frere.

thing satisfactory enough to ascertain whose portrait it is. You will forgive me if I suggest doubts that do not tend to corroborate your opinion; and you must excuse them, as I have never seen the picture itself.

By the general look and dress I should have concluded it drawn in the reign of Henry 8th, or at soonest of Henry 7th. The dress is extremely like those of the former's time, and at present I cannot recollect having seen any such even in the time of Edward 4th, when, and in Henry 6th's time, they seem to have worn loose robes, and especially not such close sleeves.

The red rose is a leading presumption that it represents some prince of the house of Lancaster, though perhaps it is no certain criterion. It was pretty common under Henry 8th to give a flower in the hand. Edward the Sixth is drawn with a pink. Still I am persuaded that during the reign of Edward 4th and Richard 3rd nobody would have cared to bear a *red* rose.

That the picture represents the Duke of Gloucester or Exeter I much question, as the distinction of the roses was certainly not adopted so early as the time of the latter, and I imagine not even in that of the former, nor till Richard Duke of York, father of Edward 4th, declared his pretensions. When the two roses were generally used as party distinctions they may have been borne by the partisans of each faction from zeal, and in that case the portrait would not necessarily exhibit a prince of Lancaster, but only a zealous adherent. This is mere conjecture. But I do think that, supposing it a Lancastrian prince, it is one that lived after the accession of Henry 7th, when the red rose was become a very courtly cognizance. For instance, it may represent John Viscount Wells, who was related to Henry 7th, and having married a daughter of Edward 4th might choose to mark his attachment to the red rose, for fear of being suspected in that

jealous time of being too partial to his wife's family. There is another person whom I think it still more likely to represent, which is Sir Charles Somerset[1], afterwards Earl of Worcester, of the bastard line as Harry 7th himself was, and ancestor of the Dukes of Beaufort. I know no man either in that reign or the subsequent so likely to have affected that royal badge, both as it flattered the King's and his own very scanty pretensions to blood royal.

If we suppose it, as I own the dress inclines me to think, of the reign of Henry 8th, I can find nobody whom it so probably exhibits as Edward Stafford, the last Duke of Buckingham, a true prince of the blood, and who aiming at the crown, and being also, by his grandmother[2] I think, descended from the Somersets, might affect the red rose, the only royal cognizance of which the Henrys were not jealous.

I could still hint at another person, supposing the picture painted in the reign of Henry 7th, who was very likely to give the cognizance of Lancaster; I mean, his uncle, Jasper Duke of Bedford.

In short, Sir, I fear we may multiply conjectures, and yet not ascertain the specific person intended, as there are only marks enough to furnish guesses, and we have not lights from that age sufficient to identify the person. I wish I could have given you better assistance; but I had rather leave obscurities in their darkness than, as most antiquaries do, pronounce rashly. Truth is the sole merit of most antiquities; and when we cannot discover the truth, what value is there in dogmatic error about things that have no intrinsic value?—and such were all our pictures before

[1] Natural son of Henry Somerset, third Duke of Beaufort, whose surname he assumed. He was created Earl of Worcester in 1514, and died in 1526.

[2] The grandmother of the Duke of Buckingham was Lady Joan Beaufort, the legitimated daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.

Holbein, and infinitely the greater part of our pictures since!

Mr. Granger, I see by the papers, has published his Supplement. I have not yet received it. I am sorry his bookseller has quoted me for the list of unengraved portraits. It did not deserve such parade.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient humble servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

1561. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 18, 1774.

WHAT I am going to say to you you must manage with the greatest prudence, that is, with your usual discretion and good sense. I was this morning with your brother at Richmond. He made grievous complaints of your nephew. The chief points of resentment were these: first, that Sir Horace before he went abroad would take all his own affairs into his own hands, which before your brother conducted. I could not hold this so very unreasonable. Secondly, that he had taken away with him 900*l.* that your brother had paid him, and whatever else he could amass. No great crime in this. Lastly, that great bills came in from Sir Horace's annuitants and creditors, though there is no money to pay them. He thinks, continued your brother, that I will pay his bills, rather than let him be dishonoured, though he already owes me so much. I certainly will not let him be disgraced *abroad*, especially as that would bring him home—but I will not pay his annuitants here; that I am determined upon.

My dear Sir, it would be very impertinent in me to enter

LETTER 1561.—Not in C.; now first printed from transcript in possession of Earl Waldegrave.

into this affair, if my motive was not so very good. But obliged as I was to dear Gal, which I never do or can forget, loving him and you as I do, and with great affection to your nephew for your sakes and his own, for I was exceedingly pleased with his good sense and handsome behaviour to me last year, can I know what is of so much consequence to him as his uncle's anger, and not do everything upon earth in my power to prevent the worst consequences from it? What can I do so well as imparting it to you, your nephew's best friend? You will take the gentlest and fairest opportunities of warning him against offending your brother, who you know may not be quite sorry to have cause to be out of humour with him. In short, I need say no more. I leave your nephew's interests in the best hands, I hope; nay, I think he has too much sense not to see how much it is his own and the interest of his children to pay court to your brother. He must see that you have no interest but his to give this advice. You are as like your brother Gal in attachment to him as you are in everything else—and I hope you find he is like his father in affection to you. Take care your brother knows nothing of this, though it is a very honest secret to endeavour to make his nephew please him.

I have little or nothing else to say. I live chiefly here, out of the world, sick of its transactions, and parting with it silently and by degrees. Sorry from humanity for what I see, but as without power of remedying, without curiosity of knowing. The age seems to be growing as ferocious as it is abandoned; and though morality seldom prevented any excesses, I think all Europe is growing so like its Gothic ancestors, though without the plea certainly of being overpeopled, that to march with vast usurping armies is a sufficient reason for overrunning any neighbouring country. I allude to the Emperor's invasion of the state of Venice. I know nothing of it but from the public papers

—but why should I not believe it?—Poland bids me believe it, and this other reason; this bird of prey, this eagle with two beaks[1], said lately to young George Grenville, 'As soon as the breath is out of my mother's body, Europe will think me as great an incendiary as the King of Prussia.'—How decent to his mother! Does not she tremble? Do you wonder I think he has not patience to wait for that event? How sensible too to blab his intentions! And so the King of Prussia, like other monsters, has disciples already!

I tell you nothing of America, for you see in the papers as much as I know. Here the rage of elections is already begun; Lord Orford has happily saved me from having anything to do with them. It would have been the worst thorn his illness could have planted in my side. He has now taken to sailing, and lives three days and nights together upon the water. If his physicians had ordered him to be dipped in the sea, perhaps it would have been their best prescription.

You asked me lately why Mr. Conway was gone abroad. Certainly only to see armies, Prussian, Austrian, and French. The incendiaries, master and scholar, have both been very gracious to him. I had rather visit Etna and Vesuvius, who cannot help making earthquakes. This world is one great Alas! Most men suffer, yet all extol their chief plagues; yes, thanks to those dogs the litterati! Adieu!

P.S. I hope Tuscan Secretaries of State do not open letters. Bless me, I should be guilty of *laesae Majestatis* in half the courts of Europe!

2nd P.S. I just hear that your Anglo-Florentine Earl[2] is married at last, and to an Englishwoman, nay, and that he

[1] It is not at all certain that this anecdote, which Mr. W. had heard, was true; no more than a preceding one from the same quarter. *Walpole.*

[2] The third Earl Cowper. See p. 64.

is coming home. This is so odd, that I think it no proof of his being grown more reasonable.

1562. To John Craufurd.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 26, 1774.

You tell me to write to you, and I am certainly disposed to do anything I can to amuse you; but that is not so easy a matter, for two very good reasons: you are not the most amusable of men, and I have nothing to amuse you with, for you are like electricity, you attract and repel at once; and though you have at first a mind to know anything, you are tired of it before it can be told. I don't go to Almack's nor amongst your acquaintance. Would you bear to hear of mine? of Lady Blandford, Lady Anne Conolly, and the Duchess of Newcastle? for by age and situation I live at this time of year with nothing but old women. They do very well for me who have little choice left, and who rather prefer common nonsense to wise nonsense—the only difference I know between old women and old men. I am out of all politics, and never think of elections, which I think I should hate even if I loved politics; just as if I loved tapestry I do not think I could talk over the manufacture of worsteds. Books I have almost done with too; at least, read only such as nobody else would read. In short, my way of life is too insipid to entertain anybody but myself, and though I am always employed, I must say I think I have given up everything in the world only to be at liberty to be very busy about the most arrant trifles.

Well! I have made out half a letter with a history very like the journal in the *Spectator*, of the man, the chief incidents of whose life were stroking his cat, and walking to Hampstead. Last night, indeed, I had an adventure

Letter 1562.—Collated with original in possession of Mr. John W. Ford.

that would make a great figure in such a narrative. *You* may be enjoying bright suns and serene horizons under the Pole, but in this dismal southern region it has rained for this month without interruption. Lady Browne and I dined as usually on Sundays with Lady Blandford. Our gentle Thames was swelled in the morning to a very respectable magnitude, and we had thought of returning by Kew Bridge; however, I persuaded her to try if we could not ferry, and when we came to the foot of the hill, the bargemen told us the water was sunk. We embarked and had four men to push the ferry. The night was very dark, for though the moon was up, we could neither see her, nor she us. The bargemen were drunk, the poles would scarce reach the bottom, and in five minutes the rapidity of the current turned the barge round, and in an instant we were at Isleworth. The drunkenest of the men cried out, 'She is gone, she is lost!' meaning they had lost the management. Lady Browne fell into an agony, began screaming and praying to Jesus, and every land and water god and goddess, and I, who expected not to stop till we should run against Kew Bridge, was contriving how I should get home; or what was worse, whether I must not step into some mud up to my middle, be wet through, and get the gout. With much ado they recovered the barge and turned it; but then we ran against the piles of the new bridge, which startled the horses, who began kicking. My Phillis's terrors increased, and I thought every minute she would have begun confession. Thank you, you need not be uneasy; in ten minutes we landed very safely, and if we had been drowned, I am too exact not to have dated my letter from the bottom of the Thames. There! there 's a letter; I think you would not want to read such another, even if written to somebody else.

Yours ever,

H. W.

P.S. Pontdeyvelde is dead, and our friend[1] fancies she is more sorry than she fancied she should be: but it will make a vacuum in her room rather than in her entertainment.

Arlington Street, Sept. 29.

This letter, which should have gone two days ago, but I had no direction, will come untimely, for you will be up to the ears in your canvass[2], as the Parliament is to be dissolved the day after to-morrow.

1563. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 27, 1774.

I should be very ungrateful indeed if I thought of complaining of you, who are goodness itself to me: and when I did not receive letters from you, I concluded it happened from your eccentric positions. I am amazed that, hurried as you have been, and your eyes and thoughts crowded with objects, you have been able to find time to write me so many and such long letters, over and above all those to Lady Ailesbury, your daughter[1], brother, and other friends. Even Lord Strafford brags of your frequent remembrance. That your superabundance of royal beams would dazzle you, I never suspected. Even I enjoy for you the distinctions you have received—though I should hate such things for myself, as they are particularly troublesome to me, and I am particularly awkward under them, and as I abhor the King of Prussia, and, if I passed

[1] Madame du Deffand, who on Sept. 4, 1774, wrote to Horace Walpole on Pontdeveyle's death as follows:—'Je fais une très-grande perte; une connaissance de cinquante-cinq ans, qui était devenue une liaison intime, est irréparable. Qu'est-ce que sont celles que l'on forme à mon âge? Mais il est inutile de se plaindre, il faut savoir supporter toutes les situations où l'on se trouve, et se dire que l'on pourrait être encore plus malheureux.'

[2] Craufurd was elected for Renfrewshire on Oct. 24, 1774.

Letter 1563.—[1] Hon. Mrs. Damer.

through Berlin, should have no joy like avoiding him—like one of our countrymen, who changed horses at Paris, and asked what the name of that town was. All the other civilities you have received I am perfectly happy in. The Germans are certainly a civil, well-meaning people, and, I believe, one of the least corrupted nations in Europe. I don't think them very agreeable; but who do I think are so? A great many Frenchwomen, some Englishmen, and a few Englishwomen; exceedingly few Frenchmen. Italian women are the grossest, vulgarest of the sex. If an Italian man has a grain of sense, he is a buffoon. So much for Europe!

I have already told you, and so must Lady Ailesbury, that my courage fails me, and I dare not meet you at Paris. As the period is arrived when the gout used to come, it is never a moment out of my head. Such a suffering, such a helpless condition as I was in for five months and a half, two years ago, makes me tremble from head to foot. I should die at once if seized in a French inn; or what, if possible, would be worse, at Paris, where I must admit everybody—I, who you know can hardly bear to see even you when I am ill, and who shut up myself here, and would not let Lord and Lady Hertford come near me—I, who have my room washed though in bed, how could I bear French dirt? In short, I, who am so capricious, and whom you are pleased to call a philosopher, I suppose because I have given up everything but my own will—how could I keep my temper, who have no way of keeping my temper but by keeping it out of everybody's way! No, I must give up the satisfaction of being with you at Paris. I have just learnt to give up my pleasures, but I cannot give up my pains, which such selfish people as I, who have suffered much, grow to compose into a system that they are partial to, because it is their own. I must make myself

amends when you return: you will be more stationary, I hope, for the future; and if I live I shall have intervals of health. In lieu of me, you will have a charming succedaneum, Lady Harriet Stanhope. Her father[2], who is more a hero than I, is packing up his decrepit bones, and goes too. I wish she may not have him to nurse, instead of diverting herself.

The present state of your country is that it is drowned and dead drunk; all water without, and wine within. Opposition for the next elections everywhere, even in Scotland; not from party, but as laying out money to advantage. In the head quarters, indeed, party is not out of the question: the day after to-morrow will be a great bustle in the City for a Lord Mayor[3], and all the winter in Westminster, where Lord Mahon and Humphrey Cotes oppose the court. Lady Powis is saving her money at Ludlow and Powis Castles by keeping open house day and night against Sir Watkin Williams, and fears she shall be kept there till the general election. It has rained this whole month, and we have got another inundation. The Thames is as broad as your Danube, and all my meadows are under water. Lady Browne and I, coming last Sunday night from Lady Blandford's, were in a piteous plight. The ferry-boat was turned round by the current, and carried to Isleworth. Then we ran against the piers of our new bridge, and the horses were frightened. Luckily, my *cicisbeo* was a Catholic, and screamed to so many saints, that some of them at the nearest ale-house came and saved us, or I should have had no more gout, or what I dreaded I should; for I concluded we should be carried ashore somewhere, and be forced to wade through the mud up to my middle. So you see one may wrap oneself up in

[2] The Earl of Harrington.
[3] When Mr. Wilkes was elected. *Walpole.*

flannel and be in danger, without visiting all the armies on the face of the globe, and putting the immortality of one's chaise to the proof.

I am ashamed of sending you but three sides of smaller paper in answer to seven large—but what can I do? I see nothing, know nothing, do nothing. My castle is finished, I have nothing new to read, I am tired of writing, I have no new or old bit for my printer. I have only black hoods around me; or, if I go to town, the family party in Grosvenor Street[4]. One trait will give you a sample of how I pass my time, and made me laugh, as it put me in mind of you; at least it was a fit of absence, much more likely to have happened to you than to me. I was playing at eighteenpenny tredrille with the Duchess of Newcastle and Lady Browne, and certainly not much interested in the game. I cannot recollect nor conceive what I was thinking of, but I pushed the cards very gravely to the Duchess, and said, '*Doctor*, you are to deal.' You may guess at their astonishment, and how much it made us all laugh. I wish it may make you smile a moment, or that I had anything better to send you. Adieu.

Most affectionately yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1564. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 28, 1774.

LADY AILESBURY brings you this[1], which is not a letter, but a paper of directions, and the counterpart of what I have written to Madame du Deffand. I beg of you seriously to take a great deal of notice of this dear old friend of mine. She will, perhaps, expect more attention from *you*, as my

[4] Lord Hertford's.

LETTER 1564.—[1] Mr. Conway ended his military tour at Paris, whither Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer went to meet him, and where they spent the winter together. *Walpole.*

friend, and as it is her own nature a little, than will be quite convenient to you: but you have an infinite deal of patience and good nature, and will excuse it. I was afraid of her importuning Lady Ailesbury, who has a vast deal to see and do, and, therefore, I have prepared Madame du Deffand, and told her Lady Ailesbury loves amusements, and that, having never been at Paris before, she must not confine her: so you must pay for both—and it will answer: and I do not, I own, ask this only for Madame du Deffand's sake, but for my own, and a little for yours. Since the late King's death she has not dared to write to me freely, and I want to know the present state of France exactly, both to satisfy my own curiosity, and for her sake, as I wish to learn whether her pension, &c., is in any danger from the present ministry, some of whom are not her friends. She can tell you a great deal if she will—by that I don't mean that she is reserved, or partial to her own country against ours—quite the contrary; she loves me better than all France together—but she hates politics: and therefore, to make her talk on it, you must tell her it is to satisfy me, and that I want to know whether she is well at court, whether she has any fears from the government, particularly from Maurepas and Nivernois: and that I am eager to have Monsieur de Choiseul and *ma grand'maman*, the Duchess, restored to power. If you take it on this foot easily, she will talk to you with the utmost frankness and with amazing cleverness. I have told her you are strangely absent, and that, if she does not repeat it over and over, you will forget every syllable: so I have prepared her to joke and be quite familiar with you at once. She knows more of personal characters, and paints them better, than anybody: but let this be between ourselves, for I would not have a living soul suspect that I get any intelligence from her, which would hurt her; and, therefore, I beg you not to let any human being know of this

letter, nor of your conversations with her, neither English nor French.

Madame du Deffand hates *les philosophes*; so you must give them up to her. She and Madame Geoffrin are no friends: so, if you go thither, don't tell her of it. Indeed you would be sick of that house, whither all the pretended *beaux esprits* and *faux savants* go, and where they are very impertinent and dogmatic.

Let me give you one other caution, which I shall give Lady Ailesbury too. Take care of your papers at Paris, and have a very strong lock to your *portefeuille*. In the *hôtels garnis* they have double keys to every lock, and examine every drawer and paper of the English they can get at. They will pilfer, too, whatever they can. I was robbed of half my clothes there the first time, and they wanted to hang poor Louis to save the people of the house who had stolen the things.

Here is another thing I must say. Madame du Deffand has kept a great many of my letters, and, as she is very old, I am in pain about them. I have written to her to beg she will deliver them up to you to bring back to me, and I trust she will. If she does, be so good to take great care of them. If she does not mention them, tell her just before you come away, that I begged you to bring them; and if she hesitates, convince her how it would hurt me to have letters written in very bad French, and mentioning several people, both French and English, fall into bad hands, and, perhaps, be printed.

Let me desire you to read this letter more than once, that you may not forget my requests, which are very important to me; and I must give you one other caution, without which all would be useless. There is at Paris a Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse[2], a pretended *bel esprit*, who was formerly an

[2] Julie Jeanne Éléonore de l'Espinasse (1732-1776), natural daughter of the Comtesse d'Albon, whose legitimate daughter was sister-in-law

humble companion of Madame du Deffand; and betrayed her and used her very ill. I beg of you not to let anybody carry you thither. It would disoblige my friend of all things in the world, and she would never tell you a syllable; and I own it would hurt me, who have such infinite obligations to her, that I should be very unhappy, if a particular friend of mine showed her this disregard. She has done everything upon earth to please and serve me, and I owe it to her to be earnest about this attention. Pray do not mention it; it might look simple in me, and yet I owe it to her, as I know it would hurt her: and, at her age, with her misfortunes, and with infinite obligations on my side, can I do too much to show my gratitude, or prevent her any new mortification? I dwell upon it, because she has some enemies so spiteful that they try to carry all English to Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse.

I wish the Duchess of Choiseul may come to Paris while you are there; but I fear she will not; you would like her of all things. She has more sense and more virtues than almost any human being. If you choose to see any of the *savans*, let me recommend Monsieur Buffon. He has not only much more sense than any of them, but is an excellent old man, humane, gentle, well-bred, and with none of the arrogant pertness of all the rest. If he is at Paris, you will see a good deal of the Comte de Broglie at Madame du Deffand's. He is not a genius of the first water, but lively and sometimes agreeable. The court, I fear, will be at Fontainbleau, which will prevent your seeing many, unless you go thither. Adieu! at Paris! I leave the rest of my

of Madame du Deffand. Mlle. de l'Espinasse was for ten years companion to Madame du Deffand. In 1763 the latter found out that her companion secretly held a *salon* in her own room, where her friends were accustomed to assemble before Madame du Deffand was ready to receive them. In consequence of this discovery Mlle. de l'Espinasse was dismissed.

paper for England, if I happen to have anything particular to tell you.

1565. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 6, 1774.

It would be unlike my attention and punctuality to see so large an event as an irregular dissolution of Parliament, without taking any notice of it to you. It happened last Saturday, six months before its natural death, and without the design being known but the Tuesday before, and that by very few persons. The chief motive is supposed to be the ugly state of North America, and the effects that a cross winter might have on the next elections. Whatever were the causes, the first consequences, as you may guess, were such a ferment in London as is seldom seen at this dead season of the year. Couriers, dispatches, post-chaises, post-horses, hurrying every way! Sixty messengers passed through one single turnpike on Friday. The whole island is by this time in equal agitation; but less wine and money will be shed than have been at any such period for these fifty years.

We have a new famous bill, devised by the late Mr. Grenville, that has its first operation now; and what changes it may occasion, nobody can yet foresee. The first symptoms are not favourable to the court; the great towns are casting off submission, and declaring for popular members. London, Westminster, Middlesex, seem to have no monarch but Wilkes, who is at the same time pushing for the mayoralty of London, with hitherto a majority on the poll. It is strange how this man, like a phœnix, always revives from his embers! America, I doubt, is still more unpromising. There are whispers of their having assembled an armed force, and of earnest supplications arrived for succours of men and ships. A civil war is no trifle; and

how we are to suppress or pursue it in such a vast region, with a handful of men, I am not an Alexander to guess; and for the fleet, can we put it upon casters and wheel it from Hudson's Bay to Florida? But I am an ignorant soul, and neither pretend to knowledge nor foreknowledge. All I perceive already is that our Parliaments are subjected to America and India, and must be influenced by their politics; yet I do not believe our senators are more universal than formerly.

They say I was too precipitate in believing Lord Cowper's match, yet most people think it is to be: a matter of perfect indifference to me; I only mentioned it as a subject we could both talk on: we have not many such. I saw the Duchess of Beaufort t'other night, who is warm in your praises. She is returned with an air of youth.

It would be quite unfashionable to talk longer of anything but elections; and yet it is the topic on which I never talk or think, especially since *I took up my freedom*[1]. In one light I can speak of them. The whole world has been so good for these six months as to believe my nephew quite in his senses. It was very far from being *my* opinion. You shall judge yourself. Lady Orford had given him power over her boroughs. The moment Mr. Sharpe, her agent, heard of the dissolution, he sent two expresses, one after the other, to my Lord. He has not deigned to send any answer or give any orders, except dispatching Mr. Skreene[2] to one of them. Mr. Boone[3], his candidate for the other, is in bed with the gout; and though there is a clear majority of three voices at one, Mr. Sharpe thinks he will lose both by his improvidence. I had taken measures to secure both. As everybody is as mad to

LETTER 1565.—[1] His quitting Parliament. *Walpole.*

[2] William Skrine, returned for Callington on Oct. 13, 1774.

[3] Charles Boone, returned for Ashburton on Oct. 11, 1774.

secure boroughs, as my Lord is in neglecting, I fancy they will allow now that his intellects are not quite so sound as they imagined. If Lady Orford asks you any questions, you may mention the state of the case in gentle terms; Mr. Sharpe, I conclude, will be more narrative.

In the midst of this combustion, we are in perils by land and water. It has rained for this month without intermission; there is a sea between me and Richmond, and Sunday was se'nnight I was hurried down to Isleworth in the ferry-boat by the violence of the current, and had great difficulty to get to shore. Our roads are so infested by highwaymen, that it is dangerous stirring out almost by day. Lady Hertford was attacked on Hounslow Heath at three in the afternoon. Dr. Eliot was shot at three days ago, without having resisted; and the day before yesterday we were near losing our Prime Minister, Lord North; the robbers shot at the postillion, and wounded the latter. In short, all the freebooters, that are not in India, have taken to the highway. The Ladies of the Bedchamber dare not go to the Queen at Kew in an evening. The lane between me and the Thames is the only safe road I know at present, for it is up to the middle of the horses in water. Next week I shall not venture to London even at noon, for the Middlesex election is to be at Brentford, where the two demagogues, Wilkes and Townshend, oppose each other; and at Richmond there is no crossing the river. How strange all this must appear to you Florentines; but you may turn to your Machiavel and Guicciardin, and have some idea of it. I am the quietest man at present in the whole island; not but I might take some part, if I would. I was in my garden yesterday, seeing my servants lop some trees; my brewer walked in and pressed me to go to Guildhall for the nomination of members for the county. I replied, calmly, 'Sir, when

I would go no more to my own election, you may be very sure I will go to that of nobody else.' My old tune is,

Suave mari magno turbantibus acquora ventis, &c.

Adieu!

P.S. Arlington Street, 7th.

I am just come to town, and find your letter, with the notification of Lord Cowper's marriage[4]; I recollect that I ought to be sorry for it, as you will probably lose an old friend. The approaching death of the Pope[5] will be an event of no consequence. That old mummery is near its conclusion, at least as a political object. The history of the latter Popes will be no more read than that of the last Constantinopolitan Emperors. Wilkes is a more conspicuous personage in modern story than the Pontifex Maximus of Rome. The poll for Lord Mayor ended last night; he and his late mayor had above 1,900 votes, and their antagonists not 1,500. It is strange that the more he is opposed, the more he succeeds!

I don't know whether Sir W. Duncan's marriage proved Platonic or not; but I cannot believe that a lady of great birth[6], and greater pride, quarrels with her family, to marry a Scotch physician for Platonic love, which she might enjoy without marriage. I remember an admirable *bon mot* of George Selwyn; who said, 'How often Lady Mary will repeat, with Macbeth, "Wake Duncan with thy knocking —would thou couldst!"'

[4] The third Earl Cowper married at Florence on June 2, 1775, Anne, daughter of Charles Gore, of Horkestowe, Lincolnshire.

[5] Clement XIV.

[6] Lady Mary Tufton, sister of the Earl of Thanet. *Walpole.*

1566. To the Rev. William Cole.

Dear Sir, Strawberry Hill, Oct. 11, 1774.

I answer yours immediately, as one pays a shilling to clench a bargain, when one suspects the seller. I accept your visit in the last week of this month, and will prosecute you if you do not execute.

I have nothing to say about elections, but that I congratulate myself every time I feel I have nothing to do with them. By my nephew's strange conduct about his boroughs, and by many other reasons, I doubt whether he is so well as he seemed to Dr. Bernardiston—it is a subject I do not love to talk on, but I know I tremble every time the bell rings at my gate at an unusual hour.

Have you seen Mr. Granger's Supplement[1]? Methinks it grows too diffuse. I have hinted to him that fewer panegyrics from funeral sermons would not hurt it. Adieu! Yours ever,

H. W.

1567. To the Rev. William Mason.

I have not imitated your silence from irony, but convenience,—not from want of forgiveness, but of matter. In a time of general elections I have no more ideas than in Newmarket season, when everybody is talking of matches and bets. I do not know who has been distanced, or thrown, or won a cup. I have only observed in the papers, that Lord John has been hard run, though he has got the plate[1]; and as the race was at York, I suppose you was on the course. The new senate, they tell me, will be a curious

Letter 1566.—[1] To his *Biographical History*.

Letter 1567.—Misplaced by C. amongst letters of Sept. 1774. (See *Notes and Queries*, April 14, 1900.)

[1] Lord John Cavendish was returned as member for the City of York on Oct. 10, 1774.

assemblage of patricians and plebeians and knights—of the post. An *old-clothesman*, who, George Selwyn says, certainly stood for *Monmouth*, was a candidate, but unsuccessful. Bob[2], formerly a waiter at White's, was set up by my nephew for two boroughs, and actually is returned for Castle Rising with Mr. Wedderburn;

Servus curru portatur eodem;

which I suppose will offend the Scottish consul, as much as his countrymen resent an Irishman[3] standing for Westminster, which the former reckon a borough of their own. For my part, waiter for waiter, I see little difference; they are all equally ready to cry, 'Coming, coming, Sir.'

I have heard nothing but what you tell me of Johnson's detection[4], nor shall believe it till I see it. I have been likewise told that Macpherson is to publish the papers of James II, and detect Sir John Dalrymple. *Credat Judaeus!* Is that house so divided against itself? I should have as soon believed Lord Mansfield had been to Paris for materials to prove the Assassination Plot. Really, Mr. Mason, you people who live in the country are strangely credulous! We are ignorant enough at Twickenham, *mais point jusqu'à ce point-là.*

Your Life may as well have patience a little longer still. If it comes out in the midst of contested elections, flatter yourself as much as you will, no soul will read it. Alas, Sir! the history of a dead poet will make no more impression now than the battle of Agincourt. If you can tell us any news of the assembly of the colonies, we shall listen to you with avidity. If you have any private intelligence that Boston is levelled to the ground, and sown with salt, better

[2] Robert Macreth, afterwards knighted.

[3] Hervey Redmond Morres (d. 1797), second Viscount Mountmorres.

[4] An expression of disbelief in the genuineness of Ossian in Johnson's *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland*, published in 1775.

and better; but, dear Sir, Mr. Gray never set his foot in the Massachusetts. He and Pindar might sing very pretty catches for aught we know, but nobody cares about such things nowadays. You lose your time, indeed you do. The *belles lettres* were in fashion once, and so were fardingales. But this is a grave nation, and soon grows weary of trifles. For one while we were mad about commerce, but that bubble is over too. We have at last found out that fleets do more good by destroying trade than by protecting it; for if we have no trade, we are not vulnerable by an enemy. Spain enjoys Peru and Mexico by extirpating the inhabitants. She found that her natives migrated thither. What did she do? Laid waste the New World; and the Spaniards stayed at home—to be sure; and we are going to be as wise. I wish you would turn your mind to these things as I do. There is some good in fathoming the arcana of Government, but poetry and writing lives is an occupation only fit for a schoolboy,—

Non sic fortis Etruria crevit,
Scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma.

No, she conquered the world and plundered her provinces, and then was blest with those demigods, Caligula, Domitian, and Heliogabalus, who were always sent to heaven as soon as they were ripe for it. Adieu!

1568. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 15, 1774.

Why, Madam, you are a Proteus in petticoats, and every day appear in some new character! Three days ago you was setting out ambassadress to Spain: to-day you are agent for Mr. Ongley[1], and carrying a county election.

Letter 1568.—[1] Robert Henley-Ongley, M.P. for Bedfordshire; cr. (July 30, 1776) Baron Ongley, of Old Warden in Ireland; d. 1785.

Next week I suppose you will set out for Rome and make a Pope. I am sorry to put you in mind of an old observation, that they who attempt everything seldom are at the head of anything. You will not be the most conspicuous of ambassadresses, unless you go in your own right, as the Maréchale de Guébriant was sent to Poland without her husband. You will not be the first of electresses, unless you sit on the hustings like the Duchess of Northumberland. As to going to Madrid without Lord Ossory, you would not dislike it, if it was only to disappoint me of a son and heir; but let me see you in the porch of Bedford church, clapping Tom and Jack on the back, and tossing up a diamond cap in a huzza! Seriously, I should be very unhappy if I believed in your embassy, but as *we were assured of it on creditable authority* I was very little frightened, besides some private reasons of my own for doubting. It was not from your Ladyship's silence. The *corps diplomatique*, I know, keep secrets even after they have been in the *Gazette*, and were I impertinent enough to ask the question, to be sure you would answer like the Tuscan Envoy on Cromwell's death, 'Some say we are to go to Spain, some say we are not; for my part, I believe neither one nor t'other.'

You ask me, Madam, what *I* am doing? As I have no public character nor am tied to any mystery, I can answer very explicitly, what I generally am doing, laughing at everybody else. I have escaped the two things I hate and dread the most, Parliament and the gout; the first, as I told you in my last, might have happened *now*, in spite of my teeth, if my nephew had continued as bad as he was; the last I feared I should have had before this time, but *my reckoning was out last night*, and I have now great confidence in the bootikins for keeping it off.

I sing *Io Paean* to Apollo, as god of medicine, for putting

off both my nephew's fit and mine, and give a loose to my spirits by diverting myself with all you who are over head and ears in elections, while I am enjoying the sunshine of October, and see even the horse-chestnuts in full leaf; but I beg your Ladyship's pardon, what care you what a man does who has not a freehold in the world?

What an insignificant being! and the old fool pretends to be happy! I own it is very insolent at fifty-eight to be even contented; but what can I do, Madam? If I had any misfortunes, I should consider how short a time they could last; and the gout itself, about which I own I am no stoic, must be cured, or deliver me for ever. Not that I am like poor Lord Holland, and wish to die. I like life extremely, if I hold it on no worse terms. I am not likely to play the fool myself, and one may trust that there are enough that will, to keep one in diversion. It is all the ill-will I have to the world; and as I have too much sense to think of curing anybody, I hope it is a very innocent amusement to sit in my own room and smile,—I mean for anybody but a Spanish ambassadress. What difficulty I should have, if I lived to your return, to compose my face to becoming gravity; and if I heard you ring and order your majordomo to call Lady Anne's duenna! I would try to behave as properly as if you made me

Your Excellency's, &c., &c.,

THE GOVERNOR OF BARATARIA.

1569. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday, Oct. 16, 1774.

I RECEIVED this morning your letter of the 6th from Strasburg; and before you get this you will have had three from me by Lady Ailesbury. One of them should have reached you much sooner; but Lady Ailesbury kept it,

not being sure where you was. It was in answer to one in which you told me an anecdote, which in this last you ask if I had received.

Your letters are always so welcome to me, that you certainly have no occasion for excusing what you say or do not say. Your details amuse me, and so would what you suppress; for, though I have no military genius or curiosity, whatever relates to yourself must interest me. The honours you have received, though I have so little taste for such things myself, gave me great satisfaction; and I do not know whether there is not more pleasure in *not* being a prophet in one's own country, when one is almost received like Mahomet in every other. To be an idol at home is no assured touchstone of merit. Stocks and stones have been adored in fifty regions, but do not bear transplanting. The Apollo Belvidere and the Hercules Farnese may lose their temples, but never lose their estimation, by travelling.

Elections, you may be sure, are the only topic here at present—I mean in England—not on this quiet hill, where I think of them as little as of the spot where the battle of Blenheim was fought. They say there will not be much alteration, but the Phœnix will rise from its ashes with most of its old plumes, or as bright. Wilkes at first seemed to carry all before him, besides having obtained the mayoralty of London at last. Lady Hertford told me last Sunday that he would carry twelve members. I have not been in town since, nor know anything but what I collect from the papers; so, if my letter is opened, M. de Vergennes[1] will not amass any very authentic intelligence from my *dispatches*.

What I have taken notice of is as follows: for the City Wilkes will have but three members: he will lose Crosby,

Letter 1569.—[1] The Comte de Vergennes, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

and Townsend will carry Oliver. In Westminster, Wilkes will not have one; his Humphrey Cotes is by far the lowest on the poll; Lord Percy and Lord T. Clinton are triumphant there. Her Grace of Northumberland sits at a window in Covent Garden, harangues the mob, and is 'Hail, fellow, well met!' At Dover, Wilkes has carried one, and probably will come in for Middlesex [2] himself with Glynn. There have been great endeavours to oppose him, but to no purpose. Of this I am glad, for I do not love a mob so near as Brentford; especially as my road lies through it. Where he has any other interest I am too ignorant in these matters to tell you. Lord John Cavendish is opposed at York, and at the beginning of the poll had the fewest numbers. Charles Fox, like the Ghost in *Hamlet*, has shifted to many quarters; but in most the cock crew, and he walked off [3]. In Southwark there has been outrageous rioting; but I neither know the candidates [4], their connections, nor success. This, perhaps, will appear a great deal of news at Paris: here, I dare to say, my butcher knows more.

I can tell you still less of America. There are two or three more ships with forces going thither, and Sir William Draper as second in command.

Of private news, except that Dyson has had a stroke of palsy and will die [5], there is certainly none; for I saw that shrill Morning Post, Lady Greenwich, two hours ago, and she did not know a paragraph.

I forgot to mention to you M. de Maurepas. He was by far the ablest and most agreeable man I knew at Paris: and if you stay, I think I could take the liberty of giving you a letter to him; though, as he is now so great a man,

[2] Wilkes was returned for Middlesex on Oct. 20, 1774.

[3] He was returned for Malmesbury.

[4] The members elected were Nathaniel Polhill and Henry Thrale.

[5] Dyson lived till 1776.

and I remain so little an one, I don't know whether it would be quite so proper—though he was exceedingly good to me, and pressed me often to make him a visit in the country. But Lord Stormont[6] can certainly carry you to him—a better passport.

There was one of my letters on which I wish to hear from you. There are always English coming from Paris, who would bring such a parcel: at least, you might send me one volume at a time, and the rest afterwards: but I should not care to have them ventured by the common conveyance. Madame du Deffand is negotiating for an enamel picture[7] for me; but, if she obtains it, I had rather wait for it till you come. The books I mean are those I told you Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer would give you a particular account of, for they know my mind exactly. Don't reproach me with not meeting you at Paris. Recollect what I suffered this time two years; and, if you can have any notion of fear, imagine my dread of torture for five months and a half! When all the quiet of Strawberry did but just carry me through it, could I support it in the noise of a French hotel! and, what would be still worse, exposed to receive all visits? for the French, you know, are never more in public than in the act of death. I am like animals, and love to hide myself *when I am dying*. Thank God, I am now two days beyond the crisis when I expected my dreadful periodic visitant, and begin to grow very sanguine about the virtue of the bootikins. I shall even have courage to go to-morrow to Chalfont for two days, as it is but a journey of two hours. I would not be a day's

[6] English Ambassador in Paris.

[7] 'J'oubliais de vous dire que Mariette est mort; je me suis déjà informée (mais sans succès) où l'on pourrait trouver ses héritiers; si je l'apprends, désirez-vous que je fasse demander s'ils consentiraient à vendre ce portrait en émail, par Petitot, de Madame d'Olonne? En ce cas, il faut me dire quel prix vous y voulez mettre.' (Madame du Deffand to Horace Walpole, Sept. 20, 1774.)

journey from hence for all Lord Clive's diamonds. This will satisfy *you*. I doubt Madame du Deffand is not so easily convinced: therefore, pray do not drop a hint before her of blaming me for not meeting you; rather assure her you are persuaded it would have been too great a risk for me at this season. I wish to have her quite clear of my attachment to her; but that I do not always find so easy. You, I am sure, will find her all zeal and *empressement* for you and yours. Adieu!

1570. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 22, 1774.

Though I have been writing two letters, of four sides each, one of which I enclose, I must answer your two last, if my fingers will move; and talk to you on the contents of the enclosed.

If the Jesuits have precipitated the Pope's death[1], as seems more than probable, they have acted more by the spirit of their order, than by its good sense. Great crimes may raise a growing cause, but seldom retard the fall of a sinking one. This I take to be almost an infallible maxim. Great crimes, too, provoke more than they terrify; and there is no poisoning all that are provoked, and all that are terrified; who alternately provoke and terrify each other, till common danger produces common security. The Bourbon monarchs will be both angry and frightened, the Cardinals frightened. It will be the interest of both not to revive an order that bullies with arsenic in its sleeve. The poisoned host will destroy the Jesuits, as well as the Pope: and perhaps the Church of Rome will fall by a wafer, as it rose by it; for such an edifice will tumble when once the crack has begun.

Letter 1570.—[1] Benedict XIV, Ganganelli. *Walpole.*—Not Benedict, but Clement, XIV.

Our elections are almost over. Wilkes has taken possession of Middlesex without an enemy appearing against him; and, being as puissant a monarch as Henry the Eighth, and as little scrupulous, should, like him, date his acts *From our Palace of Bridewell, in the tenth year of our reign.* He has, however, met with a heroine to stem the tide of his conquests; who, though not of Arc, nor a *pucelle*, is a true *Joan* in spirit, style, and manners. This is her Grace of Northumberland[2], who has carried the mob of Westminster from him; sitting daily in the midst of Covent Garden; and will elect her son[3] and Lord Thomas Clinton[4], against Wilkes's two candidates, Lord Mahon[5] and Lord Mountmorris. She puts me in mind of what Charles the Second said of a foolish preacher, who was very popular in his parish: 'I suppose his nonsense suits their nonsense.'

Elections naturally bring me to the subject of the enclosed, which you must read, seal, and deliver to Lady O. You will see how her distrust of me, and what she thought cunning, has fallen on herself. I have not told her so, because I would not make mischief, but her agent Sharpe has been still more to blame. When she pretended to approve all I said, but would not do anything I advised, on the contrary promised one of her seats to Sir William Hamilton, and offered another to Sharpe for his nephew, he on his side was wishing to sell both, but I prevented it; which he took so ill, that he would not assist me in preventing her son from letting a farm on her jointure to a jockey, nor would even send me an answer. Now all their ingenuity has fallen on themselves; he, after a silence of many months, has sent me a letter lamenting my Lord's conduct—I suppose meaning to lay the blame on me, who would have hindered it, if he and his mistress had

[2] Lady Elizabeth Seymour. *Walpole.*

[3] Earl Percy. *Walpole.*

[4] Second son of Henry, Duke of Newcastle. *Walpole.*

[5] Only son of Earl Stanhope. *Walpole.*

not prevented my meddling. I have very plainly, though in very civil terms, told him my mind. I have not told it to her on him, and have only hinted at her own misjudged address – cunning people always blunder by supposing nobody has any sense but themselves. I have, however, given her very good advice, which she will not take. I cannot help it; it was right for me to give it.

I have told her too my resolution of never undertaking the burden again. I have had plenty of reasons, and few thanks for all I did and suffered—but in one word, I could now do no good. The boroughs are gone, and the farms are let. He is frantic in his conduct, and cunning in his behaviour; I will give you a strong instance of both; Macreth is evidence of the first; and of the second, his excusing himself by saying he supposes Macreth[6] had lent his mother money. Do not tell her this. I have concealed from her, too, that Macreth is not to expect to be repaid till her death. One must make the best of everything, but it is shocking to see the worst.

Let me sweeten my letter by making you smile. A Quaker has been at Versailles; and wanted to see the Comtes de Provence and d'Artois dine in public, but would not submit to pull off his hat. The Princes were told of it; and not only admitted him with his beaver on, but made him sit down and dine with them. Was not it very sensible and good-humoured? You and I know one who would not have been so gracious: I do not mean my nephew Lord Cholmondeley[7]. Adieu! I am tired to death.

P.S. I have seen the Duchess of Beaufort[8]; who sings

[6] Robert Macreth. He had been a waiter at White's. Lord Orford, having borrowed money of him, brought him into Parliament for his borough of Castle Rising; and, to excuse it, pretended that his mother, Lady Orford, who knew nothing of it, had borrowed the money. *Walpole.*

[7] He means the Duke of Gloucester. *Walpole.*

[8] Elizabeth, daughter of John Berkeley, of Stoke Gifford, Glouces-

your praises quite in a tune I like. Her manner is much unpinioned to what it was, though her person remains as stately as ever; and powder is vastly preferable to those brown hairs, of whose preservation she was so fond. I am not so struck with the beauty of Lady Mary[9] as I was three years ago. Your nephew, Sir Horace, I see by the papers, is come into Parliament[10]: I am glad of it. Is not he yet arrived at Florence?

Pray deliver my letter instead of sending it. I should like to know her first sensations on reading it, before she has time to determine how she will feel upon it.

1571. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 27, 1774.

Don't be angry, dear lady! I did not mean any offence to your conjugal zeal. I always knew you could fill any part you please, and could carry a county election as easy as a prize at a ball. When I compared you to the Duchess of Charing Cross, as the newspapers call her, was it possible you should think I saw any resemblance? If *you* took it for a sneer, *she* must have taken it for a compliment, which I doubt she would not do. Your troubles, I hope, are over and crowned with victory; mine are so, if you do not go to Madrid.

I know nothing, for I will not know the only thing that is to be known, elections. I am very ignorant who is chosen for my Lord Orford's boroughs. As he is so perfectly in his senses, I suppose he has brought in some men of quality or great speakers, or that some minister has recommended to

tershire; m. (1740) Lord Charles Noel Somerset, who succeeded his brother as fourth Duke of Beaufort in 1746.

[9] Lady Mary Somerset, youngest daughter of Charles Noel, Duke of Beaufort. She was afterwards married to the Duke of Rutland. *Walpole.*

[10] As member for Maidstone.

him an intimate friend, who will give *credit* to the recommender, and be useful to my Lord himself. Had he remained out of order, somebody or other might have taken advantage of his weakness, and imposed somebody upon him that would disgrace him; but as he is so well, I am easy. I do not desire the little vanity of having everybody say, that if I had had the management of his affairs, he would not have been exposed; nor could any man, surely, who wished me ill, make such a blunder as to give me that triumph!

Have you heard, Madam, of the Quaker that has dined with the Comtes de Provence and d'Artois? It is exactly true. He would not pull off his hat; they admitted him with it on, and then made him sit down to table with them. Charles II could not have been better humoured.

They say the late Pope was poisoned by the Jesuits. These gentlemen and the Czarina will repoison many royal personages that Voltaire had unpoisoned; and as he has both abused and praised the Jesuits, he may take which side he pleases, as he has done about every other question.

In the neighbouring city of Twickenham they talk of nothing but houses broken open and robbed. I have called my militia into my castle, and mounted cannon on the battlements. Yet I was more afraid of a contested election for Middlesex; and when it was threatened, I thought I would not be the Duke of Northumberland's fine gate at Sion for the world. In short, one lives in very perilous times! The powder mills blow one up, and break all one's painted glass; one is robbed on the highway, though one is Prime Minister[1], and shot at into the bargain. I don't know what we shall come to, Madam; pray, do you? And pray, don't you think it is all that Wilkes's doing? Everybody would be good, and honest, and quiet, if it was not for him. Lady Greenwich

LETTER 1571.—[1] See letter to Mann of Oct. 6, 1774.

and I think so, and we hope you are of our opinion; and wonder some Christian don't murder him.

1572. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 29, 1774.

I have received your letter of the 23rd, and it certainly overpays me, when you thank instead of scolding me, as I feared. A passionate man has very little merit in being in a passion, and is sure of saying many things he repents, as I do. I only hope you think that I could not be so much in the wrong for everybody; nor should have been, perhaps, even for you, if I had not been certain I was the only person, at that moment, that could serve you essentially: and at such a crisis, I am sure I should take exactly the same part again, except in saying some things I did, of which I am ashamed[1]! I will say no more now on that topic, nor on anything relating to it, because I have written my mind very fully, and you will know it soon. I can only tell you now, that I approve extremely your way of thinking, and hope you will not change it before you hear from me, and know some material circumstances. You and Lady Ailesbury and I agree exactly, and she and I certainly consider only *you*. I do not answer her last, because I could not help telling you how very kindly I take your letter. All I beg is, that you would have no delicacy about my serving you any way. You know it is a pleasure to me: anybody else may have views that would embarrass you; and, therefore, till you are on the spot, and can judge for yourself (which I always insist on, because you are cooler than I, and because, though I have no interests to serve, I have passions, which equally mislead one), it will

Letter 1572.—[1] Horace Walpole had had a violent quarrel with Lord Hertford on account of the latter's failure to ensure General Conway's return at the general election. (See *Last Journals*, vol. i. pp. 401–17.)

be wiser to decline all kind of proposals and offers. You will avoid the plague of contested elections and solicitations: and I see no reasons, at present, that can tempt you to be in a hurry.

You must not expect to be Madame du Deffand's first favourite. Lady Ailesbury has made such a progress there, that you will not easily supplant her. I have received volumes in her praise. You have a better chance with Madame de Cambis[2], who is very agreeable; and I hope you are not such an English husband as not to conform to the manners of Paris while you are there.

I forgot to mention one or two of my favourite objects to Lady Ailesbury; nay, I am not sure she will taste one of them, the church of the Celestines. It is crowded with beautiful old tombs: one of Francis II whose beatitude is presumed from his being husband of the martyr Mary Stuart. Another is of the first wife[3] of John Duke of Bedford, the Regent of France. I think you was once there with me formerly. The other is Richelieu's tomb, at the Sorbonne—but that everybody is carried to see. The Hôtel de Carnavalet[4], near the Place Royale, is worth looking at, even for the façade, as you drive by. But of all earthly things the most worth seeing is the house at Versailles, where the King's pictures, not hung up, are kept. There is a treasure past belief, though in sad order, and piled one against another. Monsieur de Guerchy once carried me thither; and you may certainly get leave. At the Luxembourg are some hung up, and one particularly is worth going to see alone: it is the 'Deluge' by Nicolò Poussin, as winter. The three other seasons are good for

[2] Gabrielle Charlotte Françoise de Chimai, daughter of Alexandre Gabriel d'Alsace Hennin Liétard, Prince de Chimai, and wife of Jacques François, Vicomte de Cambis.

[3] Anne (d. 1432), daughter of Jean sans Peur, Duke of Burgundy.

[4] Where Madame de Sévigné resided. *Walpole.*

nothing; but the 'Deluge' is the first picture in the world of its kind. You will be shocked to see the glorious pictures at the Palais Royal transplanted to new canvases, and new painted and varnished, as if they were to be scenes at the Opera—at least, they had treated half a dozen of the best so, three years ago, and were going on. The Prince of Monaco has a few fine, but still worse used; one of them shines more than a looking-glass. I fear the exposition of pictures is over for this year; it is generally very *diverting*[5]. I, who went into every church of Paris, can assure you there are few worth it, but the Invalides—except the *scenery* at St. Roche, about one or two o'clock at noon, when the sun shines; the Carmelites, for the Guido and the portrait of Madame de la Vallière as a Magdalen; the Val de Grace[6], for a moment; the *treasure* at Notre Dame; the Sainte Chapelle, where in the ante-chapel are two very large enamelled portraits; the tomb of Condé at the Great Jesuits in the Rue St. Antoine, if not shut up; and the little church of St. Louis in the Louvre, where is a fine tomb of Cardinal Fleury, but large enough to stand on Salisbury Plain. One thing some of you *must* remember, as you return; nay, it is better to go soon to St. Denis, and Madame du Deffand must get you a particular order to be shown (which is never shown without) the effigies of the kings. They are in presses over the treasure which is shown, and where is the glorious antique cameo-cup; but the countenance of Charles IX is so horrid and remarkable, you would think he had died on the morrow of the St. Barthélemi, and waked full of the recollection. If you love enamels and exquisite medals, get to see the collection of a Monsieur d'Henery, who lives in the corner of the street where Sir John Lambert[7] lives—

[5] He means from their extreme bad taste. *Walpole.*

[6] A Benedictine convent.

[7] Sir John Lambert, third Baronet, a banker in Paris; d. 1799.

I forget its name. There is an old man behind the Rue de Colombier, who has a great but bad collection of old French portraits; I delighted in them, but perhaps you would not. *I*, you may be sure, hunted out everything of that sort. The convent and collection of St. Germain, I mean that over against the Hôtel du Parc Royal, is well worth seeing—but I forget names strangely—Oh, delightful!—Lord Cholmondeley sends me word he goes to Paris on Monday: I shall send this and my other letter by him. It was him I meant; I knew he was going, and had prepared it.

Pray take care to lock up your papers in a strong box, that nobody can open. They imagine you are at Paris on some commission, and there is no trusting French hotels or servants. America is in a desperate situation. The accounts from the Congress are not expected before the 10th, and expected very warm. I have not time to tell you some manœuvres against them that will make your blood curdle. Write to me when you can by private hands, as I will to you. There are always English passing backwards and forwards.

1573. To the Countess of Ailesbury.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 7, 1774.

I have written such tomes to Mr. Conway[1], Madam, and have so nothing new to write, that I might as well, methinks, begin and end like the lady to her husband: 'Je vous écris parce que je n'ai rien à faire: je finis parce que je n'ai rien à vous dire.' Yes, I have two complaints to make, one of your Ladyship, the other of myself. You tell me nothing of Lady Harriet[2]: have you no tongue,

Letter 1573.—[1] Mr. Conway and Lady Ailesbury were now at Paris together. *Walpole.*

[2] Lady Harriet Stanhope, afterwards married to Lord Foley. *Walpole.*

or the French no eyes? or are her eyes employed in nothing but seeing? What a vulgar employment for a fine woman's eyes after she is risen from her toilet! I declare I will ask no more questions—what is it to me, whether she is admired or not? I should know how charming she is, though all Europe were blind. I hope I am not to be told by any barbarous nation upon earth what beauty and grace are!

For myself, I am guilty of the gout in my elbow; the left—witness my handwriting. Whether I caught cold by the deluge in the night, or whether the bootikins, like the water of Styx, can only preserve the parts they surround, I doubt they have saved me but three weeks, for so long my reckoning has been out. However, as I feel nothing in my feet, I flatter myself that this Pindaric transition will not be a regular ode, but a fragment, the more valuable for being imperfect.

Now for my Gazette.—Marriages—Nothing done. Intrigues—More in the political than civil way. Births—Under par since Lady Berkeley left off breeding. Gaming—Low water. Deaths—Lord Morton[3], Lord Wentworth[4], Duchess Douglas[5]. Election stock—More buyers than sellers. Promotions—Mr. Wilkes as high as he can go.—Apropos, he was told Lord Chancellor[6] intended to signify to him that the King did not approve the City's choice: he replied, 'Then I shall signify to his Lordship, that I am at least as fit to be Lord Mayor as he to be Lord Chancellor.' This being more gospel than everything Mr. Wilkes says, the formal approbation was given.

Mr. Burke has succeeded in Bristol, and Sir James Peachey[7] will miscarry in Sussex. But what care you,

[3] Sholto Charles Douglas (1732–1774), fifteenth Earl of Morton.

[4] Edward Noel, first Viscount Wentworth.

[5] Margaret Douglas, widow of the first Duke of Douglas.

[6] Lord Apsley.

[7] Sir James Peachey (1723–1808),

Madam, about our Parliament? You will see the *rentrée* of the old one[8], with songs and epigrams into the bargain. We do not shift our Parliaments with so much gaiety. Money in one hand, and abuse in t'other—those are all the arts we know. *Wit and a gamut* I don't believe ever signified a Parliament, whatever the glossaries may say; for they never produce pleasantry and harmony. Perhaps you may not taste this Saxon pun, but I know it will make the Antiquarian Society die with laughing.

Expectation hangs on America. The result of the general assembly[9] is expected in four or five days. If one may believe the papers, which one should not believe, the other-side-of-the-waterists are not *doux comme des moutons,* and yet we do intend to eat them. I was in town on Monday; the Duchess of Beaufort graced our loo, and made it as rantipole as a Quaker's meeting. *Loois Quinze*[10], I believe, is arrived by this time, but I fear without *quinze louis.*

Your herb-snuff and the four glasses are lying in my warehouse, but I can hear of no ship going to Paris. You are now at Fontainbleau, but not thinking of Francis I, the Queen of Sweden[11], and Monaldeschi. It is terrible that one cannot go to courts that are gone! You have supped with the Chevalier de Boufflers[12]: did he act everything in the world, and sing everything in the world, and laugh at everything in the world? Has Madame de Cambis sung to you *Sans dépit, sans légèreté*[13]? Has Lord Cholmondeley delivered my packet? I hear I have hopes of Madame d'Olonne[14]. Gout or no gout, I shall be little in

fourth Baronet, cr. (Aug. 13, 1794) Baron Selsey, of Selsey in Sussex.

[8] The French Parliament.

[9] A General Congress sat at Philadelphia from Sept. 5 to Oct. 29, 1774, to which twelve of the colonies sent delegates.

[10] Probably Lady Powis.

[11] Christina, Queen of Sweden.

[12] Stanislas (1737–1815), Marquis, better known as the Chevalier, de Boufflers. He became a member of the French Academy in 1788.

[13] The first words of a favourite French air. *Walpole.*

[14] The enamel portrait mentioned in the letter to Conway of Sept. 28, 1774.

town till after Christmas. My elbow makes me bless myself that I am not at Paris. Old age is no such uncomfortable thing, if one gives oneself up to it with a good grace, and don't drag it about

To midnight dances and the public show.

If one stays quietly in one's own house in the country, and cares for nothing but oneself, scolds one's servants, condemns everything that is new, and recollects how charming a thousand things were formerly that were very disagreeable, one gets over the winters very well, and the summers get over themselves.

1574. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 11, 1774.

I entirely approve all you say about your nephew; and yet my affection for you and Gal's memory is so great, and I was so pleased with the young man last year, that I don't know how to help wishing that he had gone to you, as I think you would have liked him, unless he is like my nephew, engaging when with one, provoking when absent. I really thought him on his road to Florence; but as I see by the newspapers that he is chosen into Parliament, I suppose he was not set out, or turned back on the dissolution. I cannot inquire without making a visit in my neighbourhood, which I never do make, but when absolutely necessary, for I know our agreement is less risked by absence than by meeting. I will say no more on the subject. I can trust to your good sense and good temper for always doing precisely what is right.

I have so very little to tell you, that I almost think I shall detain this letter till another post. Every day may bring us critical news from America, which will give the

chief colour to the winter. I am in perfect ignorance of the situation of affairs there. I live quietly here, unconnected with all factions, enjoying the delightful place I have made, and even enjoying my old age, since the gout keeps away. The bitterness of the last fit, succeeded by my stewardship, gives a flavour to my tranquillity that, perhaps, I should not taste so much, if I had not lost it for near a year and a half. I propose to be little absent hence till after Christmas, a longer stay than I ever made in the country; but what can I see in London that I have not seen fifty times over? There is a new race, indeed, but does it promise to make the times more agreeable? Does the world talk of our orators, poets, or wits? Oh, no! It talks of vast fortunes made, or vast fortunes lost at play! It talks of Wilkes at the top of the wheel, and of Charles Fox at the bottom: all between is a blank.

It is not much better anywhere else. The King of Prussia, the hero of the last war, has only been a pickpocket in Poland. The Austrian and Russian eagles have turned vultures, and preyed on desolated campaigns. The Turkish war ended one don't know how without any signal action. France has been making Parliaments cross over and figure-in, and yet without the scene being at all amusing. For my part, I take Europe to be worn out. When Voltaire dies, we may say, 'Good night!' I don't believe this age will be more read than the Byzantine historians.

The bigamist Duchess[1] is likely to become a real peeress at last. Lord Bristol[2] has been struck with a palsy that has taken away the use of all his limbs. If he dies, and Augustus should take a fancy to marry again, as two or

LETTER 1574.—[1] Eliz. Chudleigh, married to the Duke of Kingston, though her husband, Augustus Hervey, was living. *Walpole.*

[2] George William, second Earl of Bristol. *Walpole.*

three years ago he had a mind to do, his next brother, the Bishop[3], may happen to assist the Duke of Kingston's relations with additional proofs of the first marriage. They now think they shall be able to intercept the receipt of the Duke's estate; but law is a horrid liar, and I never believe a word it says before the decision.

Nov. 14th.

There are advices from America that are said to be extremely bad: I don't know the particulars; but I have never augured well of that dispute! I fear we neither know how to proceed or retreat! I believe this is the case with many individuals, as well as with the public. Within this week we have had two deaths out of the common course. Bradshaw[4], a man well known of late, but in a more silent way than for his *fame* to have reached you, shot himself yesterday se'nnight. His beginning was very obscure; when he grew more known, it was not to his honour. He has since been a very active minister, of the second or third class, and more trusted, perhaps, than some of a higher class. Instead of making a great fortune, he had spent one, and could not go on a week longer. The Duke of Athol[5] is dead as suddenly; drowned certainly; whether delirious from a fever or from some disappointment, is not clear. Two evenings ago Lord Berkeley shot a highwayman[6]; in short, frenzy is at work from top to bottom, and I doubt we shall

[3] Frederic Hervey, Bishop of Derry, who became Earl of Bristol after his brothers George and Augustus. *Walpole.*

[4] Secretary of the Treasury. *Walpole.*

[5] John Murray, third Duke of Athol.

[6] 'Lord Berkeley, travelling after dark on Hounslow Heath, was wakened from a slumber by a strange face at his carriage window and a loaded pistol at his breast. "I have you now, my Lord," said the intruder, "after all your boasts, as I hear, that you would never let yourself be robbed!"—"Nor would I now," said Lord Berkeley, putting his hand into his pocket, as though to draw forth his purse, "but for that other fellow peeping over your shoulder." The highwayman hastily turned round to look at this unexpected intruder, when the Earl, pulling out instead of a purse a pistol, shot him dead upon the spot.' (Stanhope, *History of England*, ed. 1853–4, vol. vii. p. 313.)

not be cool till there has been a good deal of blood let. You and I shall, probably, not see the subsiding of the storm, if the humours do boil over; and can a nation be in a high fever without a crisis? I see the patients; I do not see the doctors. Adieu!

1575. To the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 11, 1774.

I am sorry there is still time, my dear Lord, to write to you again; and that though there is, I have so little to amuse you with. One is not much nearer news for being within ten miles of London than if in Yorkshire; and besides, whatever reaches us, Lady Greenwich catches at the rebound before me, and sends you before I can. Our own circle furnishes very little. Dowagers are good for propagating news when planted, but have done with sending forth suckers. Lady Blandford's coffee-house is removed to town, and the Duchess of Newcastle's is little frequented, but by your sister Anne[1], Lady Browne, and me. This morning, indeed, I was at a very fine concert at old Frank's at Isleworth, and heard Leoni, who pleased me more than anything I have heard these hundred years. There is a full melancholy melody in his voice, though a *falsetta*, that nothing but a natural voice ever compasses. Then he sung songs of Handel in the genuine simple style, and did not put one in pain like rope-dancers. Of the Opera I hear a dismal account; for I did not go to it to sit in our box like an old king dowager by myself. Garrick is treating the town, as it deserves and likes to be treated, with scenes, fireworks, and his own writing. A good new play I never expect to see more, nor have seen since *The Provoked Husband*, which came out when I was at school.

Letter 1575.—[1] Lady Anne Conolly.

Bradshaw is dead, they say by his own hand: I don't know wherefore. I was told it was a great political event. If it is, our politics run as low as our plays. From town I heard that Lord Bristol was taken speechless with a stroke of the palsy. If he dies, Madam Chudleigh must be tried by her peers, as she is certainly either Duchess or Countess. Mr. Conway and his company are so pleased with Paris, that they talk of staying till Christmas. I am glad; for they will certainly be better diverted there than here.

Your Lordship's most faithful servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

1576. To ISAAC REED[1].

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 11, 1774.

THOUGH you have not been so good as to let me know to whom I am so much obliged[2], yet I am very glad you have given me an opportunity at least of thanking you. Had I sooner known how, I should have saved you some trouble, as several of the notices you have sent me had already come to my knowledge, and are actually inserted in a new edition of my *Catalogue*[3], which has been long printed, though from some other reasons not yet published. Indeed, Sir, I am ashamed that you should have thrown away so much time upon a work that deserved it so little, and which I am sorry I cannot now make more perfect by your assistance, it being printed with other trifles of my own, and, consequently, I should be obliged to throw away the whole edition if I altered it; and that is too late to do at my time of life, subject as I am to long confinements from

LETTER 1576.—[1] Isaac Reed (1742–1807), the editor of Shakespeare.

[2] According to Cunningham the letter was addressed to 'Mr. I. R., to be left at the Chapter Coffee-house, London.'

[3] The *Catalogue of Engravers*.

the gout; a reflection that has made me give over all thoughts of troubling the public any more, which has been too indulgent to me already.

If you were inclined to be still more kind to me, it would be by letting me have the pleasure of knowing to whom I am so much indebted. I shall not be in town to stay, probably, till after Christmas, and then should be very glad to wait on you or to see you in Arlington Street, to assure you how much I am, Sir,

Your obliged and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1577. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 12, 1774.

I HAVE received a delightful letter from you of four sheets, and another since. I shall not reply to the campaigning part (though much obliged to you for it), because I have twenty other subjects more pressing to talk of. The first is to thank you for your excessive goodness to my dear old friend[1]—she has some indiscretions, and *you must not have any to her*; but she has the best heart in the world, and I am happy, at her great age, that she has spirits enough not to be always upon her guard. A bad heart, especially after long experience, is but too apt to overflow *inwardly* with prudence. At least, as I am but too like her, and have corrected too few of my faults, I would fain persuade myself that some of them flow from a good principle—but I have not time to talk of myself, though you are much too partial to me, and give me an opportunity; yet I shall not take it.

Now for English news, and then your letter again. There has been a great mortality here; though Death has rather

LETTER 1577.—[1] Madame du Deffand.

been *prié* than a volunteer. Bradshaw (as I told Lady Aylesbury last post) shot himself. He is dead, totally undone. Whether that alone was the cause, or whether he had not done something worse, I doubt. I cannot conceive that, with his resources, he should have been hopeless—and, to suspect him of delicacy, impossible!

A ship is arrived from America, and I doubt with very bad news; for none but trifling letters have yet been given out—but I am here, see nobody that knows anything, and only hear by accident from people that drop in. The sloop that is to bring the result of the general assembly is not yet come. There are indeed rumours, that both the non-importation and even non-exportation have been decreed[2], and that the flame is universal. I hope this is exaggerated! yet I am told the stocks will fall very much in a day or two.

I have nothing to tell Lady Aylesbury, but that I hear a deplorable account of the Opera. There is a new puppet-show at Drury Lane, as fine as scenes can make it, called *The Maid of the Oaks*[3], and as dull as the author could not help making it.

Except M. d'Hérouville[4], I know all the people you name. C. I doubt, by things I have heard formerly, may have been a *concussionnaire*. The Duke, your *protecteur*[5], is *médiocre* enough; you would have been more pleased with his wife.

[2] 'During their sittings in the autumn of 1774 the Congress passed resolutions to suspend all imports, or use of imports, from Great Britain or Ireland, or any of their dependancies, after the first day of December next, and all exports to those countries after the 10th of September in the year ensuing, unless American grievances should be redressed before that time.' (Stanhope, *History of England*, ed. 1853–4, vol. vi. p. 16.)

[3] By Colonel John Burgoyne. It was originally acted at The Oaks, Epsom, on the occasion of the marriage of Lord Stanley (Burgoyne's nephew by marriage) to Lady Betty Hamilton.

[4] Antoine Ricouart (d. 1782), Comte d'Hérouville de Claye, a military writer.

[5] The Duc de la Valière; of whom Mr. Conway had said that when presented to him his reception was what might be called good, but rather *de protection*. *Berry.*

The Chevalier's[6] *bon mot* is excellent, and so is he. He has as much *bouffonnerie* as the Italians, with more wit and novelty. His impromptu verses often admirable. Get Madame du Deffand to show you his embassy to the Princess Christine[7], and his verses on his eldest uncle, beginning *Si Monsieur de Veau*[8]. His second uncle has

[6] The Chevalier de Boufflers.

[7] The Princess Christina of Saxony, Abbess of Remiremont. On the death of her father, the King of Poland, the Chevalier was sent to her with a message of condolence from the ex-King Stanislaus Leczinski, to whose household the Chevalier at that time belonged. On his return M. de Boufflers obtained leave to write the account of his embassy, which he did in verse. In order to understand the song 'it should be known that the Princess was very plain, and had very full cheeks, that the Chevalier had one side of his face much swelled at the time, and that he was allowed for his trouble only the expense of the post-horses.'

Récit du Voyage.

'Enyvré du brillant poste,
Que j'occupe maintenant,
Dans une chaise de poste,
Je me campe fièrement;
Et je vais, en Ambassade,
Au nom de mon Souverain,
Dire, que je suis malade,
Et que Luy se porte bien.
Avec une joue enflée,
Je débarque tout honteux;
La Princesse boursoufflée,
Au lieu d'une, en avait deux,
Et son Altesse Sauvage
Sans doute a trouvé mauvais,
Que j'eusse sur mon visage
La moitié de ses attraits.'

Compliment de l'Ambassadeur.

'Princesse, le Roi mon maître
Pour Ambassadeur m'a pris;
Je viens vous faire connaître
Les feux dont il est épris:
Quand vous seriez sous le chaume,
Il donnerait (m'a-t-il dit)
La moitié de son royaume
Pour celle de votre lit.'

Récit.

'La Princesse à son pupitre
Compose un remercîment,
Puis, me remet une épître,
Que j'emporte lestement.
Et je m'en vais dans la rue
Fort satisfait d'ajouter
À l'honneur de l'avoir vue
Le plaisir de la quitter.
Dans ces beaux lieux en revenant,
Je quitte l'Excellence;
Et je reçois, pour traitement,
Cent-vingt livres de France.'

(*Memoirs* of Laetitia Matilda Hawkins, 1824, vol. ii. pp. 208–9.)

[8] The impromptu in question was prompted by the contrast between the beauty of the Duc de Beauvau and the plainness of M. de Vaux, colleague of the Duc in the household of the ex-King Stanislaus. It runs as follows:—

'Si Monsieur de Vaux
Etait un peu plus beau,
Que Monsieur de Beauvau
Fût un peu moins beau;
Ce Monsieur de Vaux
Serait un beau veau,
Et Monsieur de Beauvau
Ne serait plus qu'un veau.
Mes parentes
Et mes tantes
Seraient un troupeau
Des Nymphes I O.
Si Monsieur, &c.
Puis on les bouillirait,
Puis on les rôtirait;
En blanquettes,
En croquettes,

parts, but they are not so natural. Madame de Caraman[9] is a very good kind of woman, but has not a quarter of her sister's parts. Madame de Mirepoix is *the* agreeable woman of the world when she pleases—but there must not be a card in the room. Lord ——[10] has acted like himself; that is, unlike anybody else. You know, I believe, that I think him a very good speaker; but I have little opinion of his judgement and knowledge of the world, and a great opinion of his affectation and insincerity. The Abbé Raynal, though he wrote that fine work on the *Commerce des Deux Indes*, is the most tiresome creature in the world. The first time I met him was at the dull Baron d'Olbach's: we were twelve at table: I dreaded opening my mouth in French, before so many people and so many servants: he began questioning me, 'cross the table, about our colonies, which I understand as I do Coptic. I made him signs I was deaf. After dinner he found I was not, and never forgave me. Mademoiselle de Raucoux[11] I never saw till you told me Madame du Deffand said she was *démoniaque sans chaleur*! What painting! I see her now. Le Kain sometimes pleased me, oftener not. Molé[12] is charming in genteel or in pathetic comedy, and would be fine in tragedy, if he was stronger. Préville[13] is always perfection. I like his wife in affected parts, though not animated enough. There was a delightful woman who did the Lady Wishforts, I don't know if there still, I think her name Mademoiselle Drouin[14]; and a fat woman, rather elderly, who sometimes acted the

On les servirait,
On les mangerait.
Si Monsieur,' &c.
(*Memoirs*, as above, vol. ii. p. 211.)

[9] Anne Gabrielle de Chimai, daughter of Alexandre Gabriel d'Alsace Hennin Liétard, Prince de Chimai, and wife of the Comte de Caraman. Her sister was the Vicomtesse de Cambis.

[10] Apparently Lord Shelburne, who was in Paris in the autumn of 1774.

[11] Françoise Clairien Raucourt (1753–1815).

[12] François René Molé (1734–1802).

[13] Pierre Louis Dubus, known as Préville (1721–1799).

[14] Marie Michelle Angélique Drouin (1731–1794), was in fact Préville's wife.

soubrette. But you have missed the Dumenil, and Caillaut[15]! What irreparable losses! Madame du Deffand, perhaps—I don't know—could obtain your hearing the Clairon—yet the Dumenil was infinitely preferable.

I could now almost find in my heart to laugh at you for liking Boutin's garden[16]. Do you know that I drew a plan of it, as the completest absurdity I ever saw? What! a river that wriggles at right angles through a stone gutter, with two tansy puddings that were dug out of it, and three or four beds in a row, by a corner of the wall, with samples of grass, corn, and of *en friche,* like a tailor's paper of patterns! And you like this! I will tell Park Place—Oh, I had forgot your audience in dumb-show—Well, as Madame de Sévigné said, 'Le Roi de Prusse, c'est le plus grand Roi du monde' still[17]. My love to the old Parliament; I don't love new ones.

I went several times to Madame de Monconseil's, who is just what you say. Mesdames de Tingri et de la Vauguion[18] I never saw: Madame de Noailles once or twice, and enough. You say something of Madame Mallet, which I could not read; for, by the way, your brother and I agree that you are grown not to write legibly: is that lady in being?

[15] Joseph Caillot (1732–1816), a celebrated performer in Italian comedy. He retired in 1772.

[16] See another ludicrous description of this garden in a letter to Mr. Chute. *Walpole.*—The letter of August 5, 1771; that to the Countess of Ossory of Aug. 11, 1771, contains a plan of the garden.

[17] Miss Berry notes that this alludes to General Conway's presentation to Louis XVI at Fontainebleau, of which, in his letter to Mr. Walpole, he gives the following account:—'On St. Hubert's day in the morning I had the honour of being presented to the King: 'twas a good day and an excellent deed. You may be sure I was well received, the French are so polite! and their court so polished!—The Emperor indeed talked to me every day; so did the King of Prussia regularly and much: but this was not to be compared to the extraordinary reception of his Most Christian Majesty, who, when I was presented, did not stop, nor look to see what sort of an animal was offered to his notice, but carried his head, as it seemed, somewhat higher, and passed his way.'

[18] Marie Françoise de Béthune-Charost, daughter of the Duc de Béthune; m. (1734) the Duc de la Vauguyon.

I knew her formerly. Madame de Blot[19] I know, and Monsieur de Paulmy[20] I know; but for Heaven's sake who is Colonel Conway[21]? Mademoiselle Sanadon is *la sana donna*, and not Mademoiselle *Celadon*[22], as you call her. Pray assure my good Monsieur Schouvaloff of my great regard: he is one of the best of beings.

I have said all I could, at least all I should. I reserve the rest of my paper for a postscript; for this is but Saturday, and my letter cannot depart till Tuesday: but I could not for one minute defer answering your charming volumes, which interest me so much. I grieve for Lady Harriet's[23] swelled face, and wish for both their sakes she could transfer it to her father. I assure her I meant nothing by desiring you to see the verses to the Princess Christine, wherein there is very profane mention of a pair of swelled cheeks. I hear nothing of Madame d'Olonne[24]. Oh, make Madame du Deffand show you the sweet portrait of Madame de Prie, the Duke of Bourbon's mistress[25]. Have you seen Madame de Monaco, and the remains of Madame de Brionne? If you wish to see Mrs. A——, ask for the Princesse de Ligne. If you have seen Monsieur de Maurepas, you have seen the late Lord Hardwicke[26]. By your not naming him, I suppose the Duc de Nivernois is not at Paris. Say a great deal for

[19] Marie Cécile Pauline d'Ennerie, wife of Gilbert de Chavigni, Baron de Blot.

[20] Marc Antoine René Le Voyer (1722–1787), Marquis de Paulmy, son of the Marquis d'Argenson, sometime Minister for Foreign Affairs.

[21] An officer in the French service. *Walpole.*

[22] Mademoiselle Sanadon, a lady who lived with Madame du Deffand. *Walpole.*

[23] Lady Harriet Stanhope, afterwards married to Lord Foley, was at this time at Paris with her father the Earl of Harrington. *Walpole.*

[24] The beautiful miniature of Madame d'Olonne, now at Strawberry Hill. *Walpole.*

[25] This portrait is now at Strawberry Hill. *Walpole.*—Agnès Berthelot de Pleneuf (d. 1727), Marquise de Prie, mistress of the Duc de Bourbon, who became Prime Minister on the death of the Regent Orléans, and who was disgraced in 1726. At the same time the Marquise de Prie was exiled to Normandy, where she committed suicide by poison in the following year.

[26] He means from their personal resemblance. *Walpole.*

me to M. de Guisnes. You will not see my passion, the Duchess de Châtillon[27]. If you see Madame de Nivernois, you will think the Duke of Newcastle is come to life again. Alas! where is my postscript? Adieu!

1578. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 14, 1774.

I should not have been silent so long, Madam, had I had anything agreeable to tell you; but really the times are so melancholy, that I do not care to trouble my friends with my gloomy reflections. I do not indeed know what is the matter, nor what I am so grieved about, but still as long as I see that

There is something rotten in the state of Denmark,

I am too good a patriot or courtier, which is the same thing, not to have my bosom full of cares and anxiety.

> Portents and prodigies have grown so frequent
> That they have lost their name.

I cannot say that the Thames has run backwards or overflown Richmond Hill, that the stars drop out of their sockets, that I have heard wolves howl at noonday, or that the churchyard has given up its dead to frighten people into their senses, instead of out of them, as ghosts one should think would do, if one did not know the contrary from the best authorities. Still indubitably the times are out of joint, and one must despair of the commonwealth, when Marcus Portius Bradshaw falls by his own hand, and Scotch dukes fall into horse-ponds as they are taking a walk in a fine November evening; but I will not fill your Ladyship's mind with the apprehensions that these omens have raised in mine; I will quit the subject, and answer your letter.

[27] So in the printed editions, but read Châtelet.

You do me a great deal too much honour in suspecting me of writing a speech for the new senator. All the good things in that speech were George Selwyn's, and have been repeated in every coffee-house in town these three weeks; and though I am sorry my nephew's madness has exposed him to the dirty malice of anybody that had too little generosity not to take advantage of it, I should not have been the person certainly to joke on such an occasion, divert the town at the expense of so near a relation, to whom I trust I have shown very different attention. Madness is an excuse for my nephew; they who make a friend of Macreth without being out of their senses have I suppose very good or very bad reasons for it.

Don't imagine, Madam, that I shall congratulate you on the sale of your house, at least not till I hear you have bought another. I still less can compliment you on Lord Ossory's flinging away so much money on an election, and not for himself, who was sure of his own seat. However, I do not deny but there was a greatness of mind in it, at least gratitude, considering the many favours he has received, and that he is the only one of his connection that has received any.

I am not settled in Arlington Street, nor shall be till after Christmas, Madam. I grow so old, that I find the quiet composed life I lead here more agreeable than the ways of London, and the same eternal round of the very same things. I am making catalogues of my collection, building a hothouse, ranging my medals which I have brought hither, sorting and burning papers, in short, *setting my house in order* against a certain time that happens but once in one's *life*, and which one has not time to think of in town. I have consequently not seen Armida nor Mrs. Abingdon's coiffure, which I conclude consists of as many plumes as the helmet of Otranto. The only time

I saw Lady Mary Somerset she had moulted her feathers, and wore a hat over her nose, so I only fell in love with her chin. The measles I had in the last century, and as it is one of the juvenile attributes that one does not cut a second time, like one's colt's tooth and a caper, I shall take care not to appear in public till the fashion is over, that I may be *censé* to be confined with a red face instead of a very pale one. I rejoice for Lady Louisa's sake that the measles leave no marks: she will lose nothing by a fortnight's eclipse. The only new thing I know is that I have heard Leoni, and don't remember that I ever was so pleased with a voice since *you* were born; and yet he was hoarse, by an accident which the Jews don't quite prevent.

1579. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, Nov. 23, 1774.

I am in town, Madam, and in great distress. I have lost a most faithful friend and servant, my deputy Mr. Tullie[1], and as I am a *Roi Fainéant*, I know not how to conduct my own affairs. One's first thought you may be sure is to send for Lord Chatham, but as I have difficulties enough, I don't want to be helped into more; and therefore I shall leave that resource to my heir-apparent, Mr. Martin, and only consult *my friends*. It is some comfort to me that Mr. Tullie did not die *en ministre*, but in his bed. The nation had another great loss last night: Lord Clive went off suddenly. He had been sent for to town by one of his Indian friends—and died. You may imagine, Madam, all that is said already. In short, people will be forced to die before as many witnesses as an old queen is brought to bed, or the coroner will be sent for.

Letter 1579.—[1] Joseph Tullie, Deputy Usher of the Exchequer.

Have you got the *History of the Troubadours*? It is very curious: I have longed for it several years, and yet am cruelly disappointed. St. Palaye was too old to put his materials together; his friends called 'Odd man!' and nothing was ever so dully executed. You will say of the chapters, as I did of the houses at Paris, there is such a sameness, that one does not know whether one is in that one is in, or in that one came out of.

Lord H. has just been here, and told me *the manner* of Lord Clive's death. Whatever had happened, it had flung him into convulsions, to which he was very subject. Dr. Fothergill gave him, as he had done on like occasions, a dose of laudanum, but the pain in his bowels was so violent, that he asked for a second dose. Dr. Fothergill said, if he took another, he would be dead in an hour. The moment Fothergill was gone, he swallowed another, for another it seems stood by him, and he is dead.

I am very sorry to hear Lord Holland is so ill. Does not Lord Ossory come to renew his senatorial dignity?

1580. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 24, 1774.

I THANK you, my dear Sir, for your news of the Conclave and of the Duchess[1] and her ship-load of plunder. If the captain carries it off, it will be but an episode well suited to the history. I shall like a continuation of both subjects.

As you only say that you mentioned a certain election to the Countess[2], I conclude you had not yet received my letter for her. The interlude of Macreth has given so much offence, that, after having run the gauntlet, he has

LETTER 1580.—[1] The Duchess of Kingston. *Walpole.* [2] Countess Orford, living at Florence. *Walpole.*

been persuaded to be modest and give up his seat[3]. I should not say *give*, but sell it. I do not believe the buyer will be much more creditable; but, happily, I am free from all this disgraceful transaction.

I have informed myself from Mr. Croft about your nephew; he and his wife are in the south of France and are to winter there, but will make you a visit in the spring before their return. However, as they probably will not stay long, forgive me if I say I think you had better lodge them. Will it be difficult with your temper to be patient and complying; and to Gal's son! I am persuaded you will like him; and when he sees an uncle so like his father in all goodness, can it but make impression on him? And if you can effect the least good is it not worth your while? The wife's family too demands attention.

A great event happened two days ago—a political and moral event; the sudden death of that second Kouli Khan, Lord Clive. There was certainly illness in the case; the world thinks more than illness. His constitution was exceedingly broken and disordered, and grown subject to violent pains and convulsions. He came unexpectedly to town last Monday, and they say, ill. On Tuesday his physician gave him a dose of laudanum, which had not the desired effect. On the rest, there are two stories; one, that the physician repeated the dose; the other, that he doubled it himself, contrary to advice. In short, he has terminated at fifty a life of so much glory, reproach, art, wealth, and ostentation! He had just named ten members for the new Parliament.

Next Tuesday that Parliament is to meet—and a deep game it has to play! few Parliaments a greater. The world is in amaze here that no account is arrived from America of the result of their General Congress—if any

[3] Macreth did not retire.

is come it is very secret; and *that* has no favourable aspect. The combination and spirit there seem to be universal, and is very alarming. I am the humble servant of events, and you know never meddle with prophecy. It would be difficult to descry good omens, be the issue what it will.

The old French Parliament is restored with great *éclat.* Monsieur de Maurepas, author of the revolution, was received one night at the Opera with boundless shouts of applause. It is even said that the mob intended, when the King should go to hold the *lit de justice,* to draw his coach. How singular it would be if Wilkes's case should be copied for a King of France! Do you think Rousseau was in the right, when he said that he could tell what would be the manners of any capital city, from certain given lights? I don't know what he may do on Constantinople and Pekin—but Paris and London! I don't believe Voltaire likes these changes. I have seen nothing of his writing for many months; not even on the poisoning Jesuits[4]. For our part, I repeat it, we shall contribute nothing to the *Histoire des Mœurs,* not for want of materials, but for want of writers. We have comedies without novelty, gross satires without stings, metaphysical eloquence, and antiquarians that discover nothing.

Boeotûm in crasso jurares aere natos!

Don't tell me I am grown old and peevish and supercilious —name the geniuses of 1774, and I submit. The next Augustan age will dawn on the other side of the Atlantic. There will, perhaps, be a Thucydides at Boston, a Xenophon at New York, and, in time, a Virgil at Mexico, and a Newton at Peru. At last, some curious traveller from Lima will visit England and give a description of the ruins of St. Paul's, like the editions of Balbec and Palmyra; but am I not

[4] They poisoned Pope Ganganelli. *Walpole.*

prophesying, contrary to my consummate prudence, and casting horoscopes of empires like Rousseau? Yes; well, I will go and dream of my visions.

29th.

P.S. Macreth *ayant bu sa honte* is determined to continue a member, like the rest of the world. The Ecclesiastical Court, I hear, has decided, and will pronounce, that the person commonly called Duchess of Kingston is a certain Mrs. Hervey. The new Lord Holland[5] is dead—stay; you must not believe a word I tell you. Truth in this climate won't keep sweet four-and-twenty hours. Lord Bristol says nothing can be done against the Duchess of Kingston.

The Parliament opened just now—they say the speech talks of the *rebellion*[6] of the province of Massachusetts; but if *they-say* tells a lie, I wash my hands of it. As your gazetteer, I am obliged to send you all news, true or false. I have believed and unbelieved everything I have heard since I came to town. Lord Clive has died every death in the parish register; at present it is most fashionable to believe he cut his throat. That he is dead, is certain; so is Lord Holland—and so is not the Bishop of Worcester[7]; however, to show you that I am at least as well informed as greater personages, the bishopric was on Saturday given to Lord North's brother[8]—so for once the Irishman was in the right, and a pigeon, at least a dove, can be in two places at once.

[5] Stephen Fox, second Lord Holland. *Walpole.*

[6] This was not the case.

[7] James Johnson, Bishop of Worcester, died on Nov. 26, 1774.

[8] Hon. Brownlow North (1741–1820), second son of first Earl of Guilford by his second wife, and half-brother of Lord North; Bishop of Lichfield, 1771–74; of Worcester, 1774–81; of Winchester, 1781–1820.

1581. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Arlington Street, Nov. 27, 1774.

I have received your delightful plump packet with a letter of six pages, one from Madame du Deffand, the *Éloges*[1], and the *lit de justice*. Now, observe my gratitude: I appoint you my resident at Paris; but you are not to resemble all our ministers abroad, and expect to live at home, which would destroy *my Lord Castlecomer's* view in your staying at Paris. However, to prove to you that I have some gratitude that is not totally selfish, I will tell you what little news I know, before I answer your letter; for English news, to be sure, is the most agreeable circumstance in a letter from England.

On my coming to town yesterday, there was nothing but more deaths—don't you think we have the plague? The Bishop of Worcester, Lord Breadalbane[2], Lord Strathmore[3]. The first fell from his horse, or with his horse, at Bath, and the bishopric was incontinently given to Bishop North.

America is still more refractory, and I doubt will outvote the ministry. They have picked General Gage's pocket of three pieces of cannon, and intercepted some troops that were going to him. Sir William Draper is writing plans of pacification in our newspapers; and Lord Chatham flatters himself that he shall be sent for when the patient is given over; which I don't think at all unlikely to happen. My poor nephew[4] is very political too: so we shall not want mad-doctors. Apropos, I hear Wilkes says he will propose Macreth for Speaker.

The Ecclesiastical Court are come to a resolution that the

Letter 1581.—[1] Of La Fontaine, by Chamfort and La Harpe.

[2] Lord Breadalbane lived until 1782.

[3] This was a false report.

[4] George Walpole, Earl of Orford. *Walpole.*

Duchess of Kingston is Mrs. Hervey; and the sentence will be public in a fortnight. It is not so certain that she will lose the estate. Augustus[5] is not in a much more pleasant predicament than she is. I saw Lord Bristol last night: he looks perfectly well, but his speech is much affected, and his right hand.

Lady Lyttelton, who, you know, never hears anything that has happened, wrote to me two days ago, to ask if it would not be necessary for *you* to come over for the meeting of the Parliament. I answered, very gravely, that to be sure you ought: but though *Sir James Morgan* threatened you loudly with a petition, yet, as it could not be heard till after Christmas, I was afraid you would not be persuaded to come sooner. I hope she will inquire who Sir James Morgan is, and that people will persuade her she has made a confusion about Sir James Peachy. Now for your letter.

I have been in the Chambre de Parlement, I think they call it the Grande Chambre; and was shown the corner in which the monarchs sit, and do not wonder you did not guess where it was they sat. It is just like the dark corner, under the window, where I always sat in the House of Commons. What has happened has passed exactly according to my ideas. When one King breaks one Parliament, and another another, what can the result be but despotism[6]? or of what else is it a proof? If a Tory king displaces his father's Whig Lord Chamberlain, neither Lord Chamberlain has the more or the less power over the theatres and court mournings and Birthday balls. All that can arrive is, that the people will be still more attached to the old Parliament, from this seeming restitution of a right—but the people

[5] Augustus Hervey, to whom she was first married. *Walpole.*

[6] At a *lit de justice* held on the occasion of the restoration of the Parliament of Paris, Louis XVI pronounced strongly in favour of his own supreme authority, and warned the members of the Parliament against interference in matters which might bring them into collision with the royal power.

must have some power before their attachment can signify a straw. The old Parliament, too, may some time or other give itself more airs on this confession of right; but that too cannot be but in a minority, or when the power of the crown is lessened by reasons that have nothing to do with the Parliament. I will answer for it, they will be too *grateful* to give umbrage to their restorer. Indeed, I did not think the people would be so quick-sighted at once, as to see the distinction of old and new was without a difference. Methinks France and England are like the land and the sea; one gets a little sense when the other loses it.

I am quite satisfied with all you tell me about my friend[7]. My intention is certainly to see her again, if I am able; but I am too old to lay plans, especially when it depends on the despot gout to register or cancel them. It is even melancholy to see her, when it will probably be but once more; and still more melancholy, when we ought to say to one another, in a different sense from the common, *au revoir*! However, as mine is a pretty cheerful kind of philosophy, I think the best way is to think of dying, but to talk and act as if one was not to die; or else one tires other people, and dies before one's time. I have truly all the affection and attachment for her that she deserves from me, or I should not be so very thankful as I am for your kindness to her. The Choiseuls will certainly return at Christmas, and will make her life much more agreeable. The Duchess has as much attention to her as I could have; but that will not keep me from making her a visit.

I have only seen, not known, the younger Madame de Boufflers[8]. For her musical talents, I am little worthy of them—yet I am just going to Lady Bingham's to hear the Bastardella[9], whom, though the first singer in Italy,

[7] Madame du Deffand.

[8] Amélie Désaleurs, Comtesse de Boufflers. She was an accomplished harpist.

[9] Lucrezia Agujari (d. 1783), so called in allusion to her birth.

Mrs. Yates[10] could not or would not agree with[11]; and she is to have twelve hundred pounds for singing twelve times at the Pantheon, where, if she had a voice as loud as Lord Clare's, she could not be heard. The two *bons mots* you sent me are excellent; but, alas! I had heard them both before; consequently your own, which is very good too, pleased me much more. M. de Stainville[12] I think you will not like: he has sense, but has a dry military harshness, that at least did not suit me—and then I hate his barbarity to his wife[13].

You was very lucky indeed to get one of the sixty tickets[14]. Upon the whole, your travels have been very fortunate, and the few mortifications amply compensated. If a Duke[15] has been spiteful when your back was turned, a Hero-King[16] has been all courtesy. If another King[17] has been silent, an Emperor[18] has been singularly gracious. Frowns or silence may happen to anybody: the smiles have been addressed to you particularly. So was the ducal frown indeed—but would you have earned a smile at the price set on it? One cannot do right and be always applauded—but in such cases are not frowns tantamount?

As my letter will not set forth till the day after to-morrow, I reserve the rest for my additional news, and this time *will* reserve it.

St. Parliament's day, 29th, after breakfast.

The Speech is said to be firm, and to talk of the *rebellion* of our province of Massachusetts. No sloop is yet arrived to tell us how to call the rest. Mr. Van[19] is to move for the

[10] Anna Maria Yates (d. 1787), actress; at this time Joint-Manager of the Opera.

[11] To sing at the Opera. *Walpole.*

[12] The Comte de Choiseul-Stainville, brother of the Duc de Choiseul.

[13] Upon a suspicion of gallantry, she was confined for life. *Walpole.*

[14] To witness the opening of the restored Parliament.

[15] The Duc de Choiseul.

[16] The King of Prussia.

[17] Louis XVI.

[18] Joseph II.

[19] Charles Van, M.P. for Brecon.

expulsion of Wilkes; which will distress, and may produce an odd scene. Lord Holland is certainly dead; the papers say Robinson[20] too, but that I don't know:—so many deaths of late make report kill to right and left.

1582. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Arlington Street, Dec. 15, 1774.

As I wrote to Lady Aylesbury but on Tuesday, I should not have followed it so soon with this, if I had nothing to tell you but of myself. My gouts are never dangerous, and the shades of them not important. However, to dispatch this article at once, I will tell you that the pain I felt yesterday in my elbow made me think all former pain did not deserve the name. Happily the torture did not last above two hours; and, which is more surprising, it is all the real pain I have felt; for though my hand has been as sore as if flayed, and that both feet are lame, the bootikins demonstrably prevent or extract the sting of it, and I see no reason not to expect to get out in a fortnight more. Surely, if I am laid up but one month in two years, instead of five or six, I have reason to think the bootikins sent from heaven.

The long-expected sloop is arrived at last, and is, indeed, a *man of war*! The General Congress have voted a non-importation, a non-exportation, a non-consumption; that, in case of hostilities committed by the troops at Boston, the several provinces will march to the assistance of their countrymen; that the cargoes of ships now at sea shall be sold on their arrival, and the money arising thence given to the poor at Boston; that a letter, in the nature of a petition of rights, shall be sent to the King; another to the House

[20] John Robinson, M.P. for Harwich and Secretary to the Treasury; he was not dead, but was disabled by paralysis.

of *Commons*; a third to the people of England; a demand of repeal of all the Acts of Parliament affecting North America passed during this reign, as also of the Quebec Bill: and these resolutions not to be altered till such repeal is obtained.

Well, I believe you do not regret being neither in Parliament nor in administration! As you are an idle man, and have nothing else to do, you may sit down and tell one a remedy for all this. Perhaps you will give yourself airs, and say you was a prophet, and that prophets are not honoured in their own country. Yet, if you have any inspiration about you, I assure you it will be of great service. We are at our wit's end—which was no great journey. Oh, you conclude Lord Chatham's crutch will be supposed a wand, and be sent for. They might as well send for *my* crutch; and they should not have it; the stile is a little too high to help them over. His Lordship is a little fitter for raising a storm than laying one, and of late seems to have lost both virtues. The Americans at least have acted like men, gone to the bottom at once, and set the whole upon the whole. Our conduct has been that of pert children: we have thrown a pebble at a mastiff, and are surprised it was not frightened. Now we must be worried by it, or must kill the guardian of the house, which will be plundered the moment little master has nothing but the old nurse to defend it. But I have done with reflections; you will be fuller of them than I.

1583. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, Dec. 23, 1774.

You will perceive by the change of writing that my hand hath lost its cunning. I had kept off the gout for two

Letter 1583.—Not in C.; now first printed from transcript in possession of Earl Waldegrave.

months by the bootikins, but the mighty has prevailed, vanquished me and my armour, and bound me hand and foot above a fortnight. However, the talisman has had so much virtue that the wounds have not been deep, nor will the scars, I think, remain long. Yet for these last five days I have been very ill, less by the gout than by its consequential weakness, which has chiefly affected my breast. I remember how I used to joke, on your wet-brown-paper-hood; alas! I, who was never of pasteboard, nor had a title to robust airs, seem now to be of Indian paper—but I am talking too much of myself, when I am thinking much more of you. I received a letter from you late last night that alarmed me. In it you speak of an attack of gout in terms that frighten me. I was so faint and feverish then that I could do nothing to help or quiet myself, for one cannot reason in the night on a painful pillow, so I lay thinking on you despondingly till six in the morning. As soon as I waked I sent to Mr. Croft, but he had heard nothing of you. However, as my head was grown a little clearer, I called for your letter again, and was rejoiced to find the date November the 18th, for I recollected that I had received another from you a fortnight ago whose date must be later, and so it proved, being of the 22nd. This last had brought me my Lady's answer, and that of the 18th only mentions your having delivered mine. Now the good 22nd says not a word of your illness continuing, and therefore I trust it was gone and forgotten. What the lazy 18th had been doing, or where it had stopped to drink, I don't know, but I wish it had broken its neck and never arrived!

I am glad there is an end of the other correspondence with all its high-flown compliments. The colours, however, given to the calmness are not strictly exact. The agents here could not have prevented what has happened, unless

they had received fuller powers; and it is to disguise that very ill-judged and timid policy that the blame is now laid on the sudden dissolution. However, if people are so very wise as to dupe themselves, it is no business of mine, nor shall I think any more about it.

I am so confined and able to see so little company that it is impossible I should tell you anything more than you can read in the common newspapers. The new Parliament has done nothing but common business, and appointed hearings of contested elections. What it will do after the holidays, I wish it knew itself! It must be wiser than any of its predecessors if it can remedy what the two last of them have done. In short, all North America is in a flame, and I don't see whatever the future measures shall be, but they will be new barrels of oil. However, as the quintessence of the wisdom of the nation does not lie in my head, for I did not inherit the head in which it once did lie, and as mine will probably be laid long before these troubles are at an end, I shall not trouble myself with what I can neither cure nor expect to see terminated happily.

Lord Chatham's eldest daughter is married to Lord Mahon, Lord Stanhope's son and a descendant of your old Baileys[1] and Binnings, so I make you my compliments, though I believe you are like me and don't carry on your attachments to third and fourth generations, which are never so heraldically reciprocal. Pray don't let Gatti[2] persuade you into the gout, but if he does, pray submit to it quietly. You may take out its sting by the bootikins, but if you resist it, it is such a Proteus, that it will slip into the shape of a palsy, and be even with you. Adieu! I am weary, and must bid you good night.

[1] Mr. Bailey, a Scot, who by his wife Griselda was father of Lady Binning, mother of the Earl of Haddington, and of the Countess of Stanhope. *Walpole.*

[2] Dr. Gatti, a Florentine physician, who lived long at Paris. *Walpole.*

1584. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Arlington Street, Dec. 26, 1774.

I begin my letter to-day, to prevent the fatigue of dictating two to-morrow. In the first and best place, I am very near recovered; that is, though still a mummy, I have no pain left, nor scarce any sensation of gout except in my right hand, which is still in complexion and shape a lobster's claw. Now, unless anybody can prove to me that three weeks are longer than five months and a half, they will hardly convince me that the bootikins are not a cure for fits of the gout, and a very short cure, though they cannot prevent it: nor perhaps is it to be wished they should; for if the gout prevents everything else, would not one have something that does? I have but one single doubt left about the bootikins, which is, whether they do not weaken my breast: but as I am sensible that my own spirits do half the mischief, and that, if I could have held my tongue, and kept from talking and dictating letters, I should not have been half so bad as I have been, there remains but half due to bootikins on the balance: and surely the ravages of the last long fit, and two years more in age, ought to make another deduction. Indeed, my forcing myself to dictate my last letter to you almost killed me; and since the gout is not dangerous to me, if I am kept perfectly quiet, my good old friend [1] must have patience, and not insist upon letters from me but when it is quite easy to me to send them. So much for me and my gout. I will now endeavour to answer such parts of your last letters as I can in this manner, and considering how difficult it is to read *your* writing in a dark room.

Letter 1584.—[1] Madame du Deffand.

I have not yet been able to look into the French harangues you sent me. Voltaire's verses to Robert Covelle are not only very bad, but very contemptible.

I am delighted with all the honours you receive, and with all the amusements they procure you, which is the best part of honours. For the glorious part, I am always like the man in Pope's Donne,

> Then happy he who shows the tombs, said I[2].

That is, they are least troublesome there. The *Sérénissime*[3] you met at Montmorency is one of the least to my taste; we quarrelled about Rousseau, and I never went near him after my first journey. Madame du Deffand will tell you the story, if she has not forgotten it.

It is supposed here that the new proceedings of the French Parliament will produce great effects: I don't suppose any such thing. What America will produce I know still less; but certainly something very serious. The merchants have summoned a meeting for the second of next month, and the petition from the Congress to the King has arrived. The heads have been shown to Lord Dartmouth[4]; but I hear one of the agents is against presenting it; yet it is thought it will be delivered, and then be ordered to be laid before Parliament. The whole affair has already been talked of there on the army and navy days; and Burke, they say, has shone with amazing wit and ridicule on the late inactivity of Gage, and his losing his cannon and straw; on his being entrenched in a town with an army of observation; with that army being, as Sir William Meredith had said, an asylum for magistrates, and to secure the port. Burke said he had heard of an asylum for debtors and whores, never for magistrates; and

[2] 'Then happy Man who shows the tombs! said I.'—Sat. viii. l. 102.
[3] The Prince de Conti. *Walpole.*
[4] The Colonial Secretary.

of ships, never of armies, securing a port. This is all there has been in Parliament but elections. Charles Fox's place did not come into question. Mr. ——[5], who is one of the new elect, has opened, but with no success. There is a seaman, Luttrell[6], that promises much better.

I am glad you like the Duchesse de Lauzun: she is one of my favourites. The Hôtel du Châtelet promised to be very fine, but was not finished when I was last at Paris. I was much pleased with the person that slept against St. Lambert's poem: I wish I had thought of the nostrum, when Mr. Seward, a thousand years ago, at Lyons, would read an epic poem to me just as I had received a dozen letters from England. St. Lambert is a great jackanapes, and a very tiny genius. I suppose the poem was *The Seasons*, which is four fans spun out into a Georgic. If I had not been too ill, I should have thought of bidding you hear midnight mass on Christmas Eve in Madame du Deffand's tribune, as I used to do. To be sure, you know that her apartment was part of Madame du Montespan's, whose arms are on the back of the grate in Madame du Deffand's own bedchamber. Apropos, ask her to show you Madame de Prie's picture, M. le Duc's[7] mistress—I am very fond of it—and make her tell you her history.

I have but two or three words more. Remember my parcel of letters from Madame du Deffand, and pray remember this injunction, not to ruin yourself in bringing presents. A very slight fairing of a guinea or two obliges

[5] The name is left blank in all the editions. The person in question was probably David Hartley (1732–1813), M.P. for Hull, 'much versed in finances, and friend of Lord Rockingham, had written several political tracts, and was now in Parliament for the first time.' (*Last Journals*, vol. i. p. 436, note.)

[6] Hon. John Luttrell (d. 1829), M.P. for Stockbridge; third son of first Baron Irnham (afterwards created Earl of Carhampton); took the additional name of Olmius, 1787; succeeded his brother as third Earl of Carhampton in 1821.

[7] The Duc de Bourbon.

as much, is more fashionable, and not a moment sooner forgotten than a magnificent one; and then you may very cheaply oblige the more persons; but as the sick fox in Gay's *Fables* says (for one always excepts oneself),

A chicken too might do me good——

I allow you to go as far as three or even five guineas for a snuff-box for me: and then, as ——[8] told the King, when he asked for the reversion of the lighthouse for two lives, and the King reproached him with having always advised him against granting reversions; he replied, 'Oh, Sir, but if your Majesty will give me this, I will take care you shall never give away another.'

Adieu, with my own left hand,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1585. To GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN.

DEAR SIR, Monday night, 9 o'clock.

I am so much enjoined silence, that it is the more necessary for me to speak to *you*. I am utterly incapable of writing to Paris: I have nobody to write for me, and am not allowed to dictate above two or three lines. It would oblige me infinitely if that might be to you, either at the beginning or end of your letter, if you write to-morrow. One at noon, or seven in the evening, are the cleverest hours for me—but I must not choose.

Yours, &c.,

H. W.

[8] So in all the editions; the hero of the anecdote was George Grenville. (See *Memoirs of George III*, ed. 1894, vol. ii. p. 145 and note.)

LETTER 1585.—Not in C.; reprinted from *George Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, vol. iii. p. 39.

1586. To the Marquise du Deffand.

De Londres, ce 26 Décembre, 1774.

Mais que vous êtes une drôle d'amie! Vous avez tout l'air de vous réjouir de ma goutte, car votre première idée est d'en tirer deux lettres par semaine. D'ailleurs vous oubliez la première de toutes les règles, qui est, que c'est le malade qu'on doit ménager, et non pas le malade qui doit ménager ceux qui se portent bien; maxime échappée à personne depuis Adam, hormis à vous. Voici le fait. Vendredi j'avais été obligé de dicter une grande lettre sur mes affaires, le moment après arrive votre lettre, où vous demandez deux lettres par semaine, l'une pour vous, l'autre pour mon cousin. Votre lettre d'ailleurs étant très agréable, je voulais vous complaire sur-le-champ. Mais n'ayant personne qui sût le français, il fallut m'adresser à M. Conway. Bref, cette fatigue m'épuisa tellement que j'en perdis la voix, la respiration, et le pouls. Mais abrégons. La goutte ne me fait de mal que quand je m'épuise, et je vous prie pour la quatrième fois de vous en ressouvenir.

Actuellement je me porte à merveille. Les bottines ont passé mon attente de cent piques, et je compte vous en envoyer une paire comme un ex-voto pour suspendre dans votre tribune sur la chapelle. Mon cousin vous dira le reste. Il faut me dépêcher, car mon secrétaire[1], qui n'est qu'un visitant, n'a pas du temps de reste.

J'ai envoyé ce matin chez le marchand aux émeraudes: elles sont faites, mais pas polies, et les ouvriers ne veulent pas les achever qu'après les fêtes. Je vous serais très obligé de la nouvelle Ninon, et j'en aurais grande impatience.

Letter 1586.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis.

[1] Apparently Selwyn. See the previous letter.

Grâces aussi pour le sucre d'orge, et mille fois plus de grâces pour les bonnes nouvelles de Madame d'Olonne[2]. Je vous prie de dire à Milady Aylesbury, que la meilleure manière d'assurer tout ce qu'elle aura acheté de porcelaines de Sève, c'est de l'envoyer directement à notre douane de Londres, adressé à elle-même. Je suis très pressé de recevoir les nouvelles de l'arrivée de vos parents et de votre souper. Ne manquez pas de baiser mille fois la belle petite main de la belle petite grand'maman de ma part, et si vous pouvez sans heurter le front, son joli petit pied aussi. Ne le baisez pas, mais embrassez l'Abbé aussi. Bonsoir, car je n'en puis plus, et mon secrétaire en est bien aise.

P.S. Je ne compte d'écrire à personne avant aujourd'hui en huit.

1587. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Arlington Street, Dec. 31, 1774.

No child was ever so delighted to go into breeches, as I was this morning to get on a pair of cloth shoes as big as Jack Harris's: this joy may be the spirits of dotage—but what signifies whence one is happy? Observe, too, that this is written with my own *right* hand, with the bootikin actually upon it, which has no distinction of fingers: so I no longer see any miracle in Buckinger, who was famous for writing without hands or *feet* (as if it was indifferent which one uses, provided one has a pair of either). Take notice, I write so much better without fingers than with, that I advise *you* to try a bootikin. To be sure, the operation is a little slower; but to a prisoner, the duration of his amusement is of far more consequence than the vivacity of it.

[2] A miniature which Walpole wished to buy.

Last night I received your very kind, I might say *your* letter *tout court*, of Christmas Day. By this time I trust you are quite out of pain about me. My fit has been as regular as possible; only, as if the bootikins were post-horses, it made the grand tour of all my limbs in three weeks. If it will always use the same expedition, I am content it should take the journey once in two years. You must not mind my breast: it was always the weakest part of a very weak system; yet did not suffer now by the gout, but in consequence of it; and would not have been near so bad, if I could have kept from talking and dictating letters. The moment I am out of pain, I am in high spirits; and though I never take any medicines, there is one thing absolutely necessary to be put into my mouth—a gag. At present, the town is so empty that my tongue is a sinecure.

I am well acquainted with the Bibliothèque du Roi, and the medals, and the prints. I spent an entire day in looking over the English portraits, and kept the librarian without his dinner till dark night, till I was satisfied. Though the Choiseuls will not *acquaint* with you, I hope their Abbé Barthélemi[1] is not put under the same quarantine. Besides great learning, he has infinite wit and *polissonnerie*, and is one of the best kind of men in the world. As to the grandpapa[2], *il ne nous aime pas nous autres*, and has never forgiven Lord Chatham. Though exceedingly agreeable himself, I don't think his taste exquisite. Perhaps I was piqued; but he seemed to like Wood[3] better than any of us. Indeed, I am a little afraid that my dear friend's impetuous zeal may have been a little too prompt in pressing you upon them *d'abord*:—but don't say a word of this—

LETTER 1587.—[1] The author of the *Voyage du jeune Anacharsis*. *Walpole.*

[2] A name given to the Duc de Choiseul by Madame du Deffand. *Walpole.*

[3] Robert Wood, formerly Under Secretary of State, who lived for some time in France.

it is her great goodness.—I thank you a million of times for all yours to her:—she is perfectly grateful for it. The Chevalier's[4] verses are pretty enough. I own I like Saurin's[5] much better than you seem to do. Perhaps I am prejudiced by the curse on the Chancellor[6] at the end.

Not a word of news here. In a sick room one hears all there is, but I have not heard even a lie; but as this will not set out these three days, it is to be hoped some charitable Christian will tell a body one. Lately indeed we heard that the King of Spain had abdicated; but I believe it was some stockjobber that had deposed him.

Lord George Cavendish, for my solace in my retirement, has given me a book, the history of his own Furness Abbey[7], written by a Scotch ex-Jesuit. I cannot say that this unnatural conjunction of a Cavendish and a Jesuit has produced a lively colt; but I found one passage worth any money. It is an extract of a constable's journal kept during the civil war; and ends thus: 'And there was never heard of such troublesome and distracted times as these five years have been, *but especially for constables.*' It is so natural,

[4] The Chevalier de Boufflers.

[5] The verses were as follow:—

Sur Monsieur de Malesherbes, premier président de la cour des aides.

'O! qu'on aime la bonhomie
Qui dans ta grande âme s'allie
Aux grands talents!
Tout Paris fête Malesherbes,
Le plus grand et le moins superbe
Des *revenans* *.

'Jadis l'orateur qu'on renomme,
De l'exil revenu à Rome,
Eut même accueil:
Mais le Cicéron de la France
De l'autre a toute l'éloquence
Sans son orgueil.

'Amis, sa gloire l'embarrasse,
Il faudra pourtant qu'il s'y fasse:
Mais filons doux,
Et nous reposons sur l'histoire;
Sans plus lui parler de sa gloire,
Buvons y tous—

'A celui qui si bien conseille
Son maître, dont il a l'oreille †,
Buvons aussi
A sa santé — Je vous la porte,
Mais disons que le diable emporte
On sçait bien qui!'

[6] Maupeou.

[7] *The Antiquities of Furness*, by Thomas West (1720–1779), a Jesuit in charge of the English mission in North Lancashire and Westmoreland.

* The members of the recalled Parliament were called *les revenans.*

† Le Duc de Choiseul. *Walpole.*

that *inconvenient to my Lord Castlecomer* is scarce a better proverb.

Pray tell Lady Ailesbury that though she has been so very good to me, I address my letters to you rather than to her, because my pen is not always upon its guard, but is apt to say whatever comes into its nib; and then if she peeps over your shoulder, I am *censé* not to know it. Lady Harriet's wishes have done me great good: nothing but a father's gout could be obdurate enough to resist them. My Mrs. Damer says nothing to me; but I give her intentions credit, and lay her silence on you.

Jan. 1, 1775, and a happy New Year.

I walk! I walk! walk alone!—I have been five times quite round my rooms to-day, and my month is not up! The day after to-morrow I shall go down into the dining-room; the next week to take the air; and then if Mrs. ——[8] is very pressing, why, I don't know what may happen. Well! but you want news, there are none to be had. They think there is a ship lost with Gage's dispatches. Lady Temple gives all her diamonds to Miss Nugent[9]. Lord Pigot lost 400*l.* the other night at Princess Amelia's. Miss Davis has carried her cause against Mrs. Yates, and is to sing again at the Opera. This is all my coffee-house furnished this morning.

1588. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, Jan. 1, 1775.

This morning, Madam, as soon as my eyes opened, Philip stood before me, bearing in one hand a shining vest, and in

[8] The name is left blank in all the editions.

[9] Hon. Mary Elizabeth Nugent, only daughter and heiress of Robert Nugent, Viscount Clare (created Earl Nugent in 1776); m. (1775) George Grenville, afterwards Earl Temple and Marquis of Buckingham; d. 1812.

the other a fair epistle, written in celestial characters, which, however, it was given me to understand.

The present, I saw, came from no mortal hand, and seemed to be the boon of all the gods, or rather of all the goddesses; for there was taste, fancy, delicacy, flattery, wit, and sentiment in it, and so artfully blended, that no celestial in breeches could possibly have mixed so bewitching a potion. Venus had chosen the pattern, Flora painted the roses after those at Paphos, Minerva had worked the tambour part, Clio wrote the ode, and Thalia took off the majestic stiffness of the original sketch by breathing her own ease all over it.

These visions naturally presented themselves. I told you, Madam, I was but just awake, and at that hour, somehow or other, one's head is very apt to be full of Venus and such pretty figures. Vanity soon took their place, and, not to be unworthy of my visitants, I held up my head, and thought it became so favoured a personage as myself to assume a loftier port, and behave like my predecessors who had been honoured in the same manner.

Was I more like Æneas when his mother brought him armour of heavenly temper, or like Paris when three divinities exerted all their charms and all their artifices to ensnare his partiality? To be sure I could have been simple enough to be content with the character of Horatius Flaccus, with which my patronesses had hailed me; but when I ordered Philip to reach me my lyre, that I might pour out a rapturous epode or secular hymn in gratitude, he said, 'Lord! Sir, you know Horace's lyre is at Ampthill.'

What follows is more melancholy. I rose; the first object was to examine more attentively the inspired vest in the full sun against which it shone gorgeously; but, alas! as I crept to the window, in the glass I beheld—what do you think, Madam?—such an emaciated, wan, wrinkled, poor skeleton, that—O! adieu, visions, goddesses, odes, vests of roses, and

immortal Strawberry!—I thought I saw a thinner Don Quixote attired by the Duchess for sport. Shocked, sunk from my altitudes, and shrinking into myself, I bade Philip Pança fold up the vest, and vowed never to dress up my ghost-like Adonis, but to consecrate the dear work of dear fingers to the single word (I will believe in the charming ode) Friendship; and may the memory of that word, the vest and the ode, exist when Strawberry Hill, its tinsel glories and its master, are remembered nowhere else!

1589. To John Craufurd.

Arlington Street, Jan. 2, 1775.

I was not surprised, but rather the more grateful because I was not surprised, at your kind letter. I am totally recovered, excepting my right hand: I walk without a stick; nay, am told look as well as ever I did, which never could be a compliment to me in any part of my life. However, as I advance with dignity I shall descend to the first floor but to-morrow, finding it in vain to wait till I am *sent for*; a mishap that has befallen greater folk than me. Still I am content with being confined but five weeks, instead of five months; and though it will make the faculty more violent than ever against the bootikins, me at least they shall not persuade out of them; and though they will be ready to poison me for speaking the truth, it shall not be by any of their own potions.

I hope you have been diverted with your tour, and I am sure you are always the better for being diverted. I have received a charming present, and more charming verses from Ampthill. You shall see both at your return, if you have not already seen them.

Letter 1589.—Collated with original in possession of Mr. John W. Ford.

Tuesday, 3rd.

Cybèle va descendre[1]; that is, an old woman, or an old man, which is the same thing, is come downstairs and writes to you with her own hand, which goddesses never do but when they assume a mortal shape, and then billets-doux and all the rest follow of course. Indeed, there is more of the goddess than the woman in my partiality for you. I doubt your *petite santé* would tempt no ancient dame to choose you for her Atys, though a divinity who would know the goodness of your heart would prefer you to Hercules. All this rigmarole only to tell you I am much better, and

Very sincerely yours,

H. Walpole.

1590. To the Marquise du Deffand.

De Londres, ce 4 Janvier, 1775.

Votre derniere lettre etoit tout ce que je pouvois desirer, et je vous en remercie: mais celle de my Lady Ailesbury, que je recus avec, ne me plut nullement. Elle dit que vous vous etes tellement epuisèe à votre fete, que vous en avez pensè mourir. J'espere qu'on n'exilera plus vos parens, si le retour doit vous tant couter[1]. Vous pouvez vous tranquilliser entierement sur mon etat; il ne me reste que de l'enfleure à la main droite, et cependant je m'en sers actuellement, bien qu'enveloppèe de la bottine: M. Wiart ne reconnoitra pas mon ecriture; à force d'etre difficile, elle est meilleure. Je marche sans bequille et sans aide, mais il est vrai que je suis encore tres foible, et bien plus Revenant que

[1] These words occur in Quinault's opera *Atys*; they were probably quoted by Walpole from the letter of Madame de Sévigné to Madame de Grignan of Aug. 6, 1677.

Letter 1590.—Not in C.; now first printed (*verbatim et literatim* from original in Walpole's handwriting in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis.

[1] The Duc and Duchesse de Choiseul had returned to Paris for the first time since the Duke's fall from power.

vos parlementaires. Mais je me repose assez: La Ville est deserte à l'heure qu'il est; et de ceux qui y sont, Je n'en recois que très peu. C'étoit la mode il y a deux ans de me visiter. Toutes les belles, toutes les grandes Dames vinrent ici à l'envi: actuellement j'affiche la langueur; et me suis excusè sinon à mes Amis intimes.

Voici Mercredy au soir, et ce Diable d'homme ne m'a pas encore apportè les èmeraudes. J'ai peur de manquer le Coche de Douvres. Couty [2] m'a rendu ce matin deux grilles et quatre livres de Thè, qui iront dans la meme Caisse.

Mes parens vous auront dit le grand parti qui s'est offert pour leur Niece my Lady Francoise [3]. C'est une très aimable Fille et très jolie. Toutes ces Cousines le sont.

Je n'ai pas etè fachè de l'absence de mes parens. J'aime à etre tout seul dans les souffrances. Je scais exactement comment il faut me traiter. Il ne faut que le silence et un regime extremement froid. Dans ce pais cy tout le Monde s'y oppose et me preche. Je n'aime que des Domestiques obeissans, et certainement je n'ai pas envie de me tuer. Vous voyez que je m'y connois, et me suis gueri bien promptement. Encore suis-je tres content du sejour qu'ils ont fait à Paris, des honneurs, des politesses, des bontès, qu'ils y ont recus. Je suis charmé qu'ils ont fait connoissance avec vous, et qu'ils ont le bonheur de vous plaire. A present je commence à desirer leur retour, et je vous prie de leur donner congè.

Ce jeudy 5.

Comme le Carosse de Douvres part demain, et ne passe qu'une fois par semaine, j'avois peur que les Emeraudes n'y seroient pas à temps; mais les voici; le Marchand me les

[2] The brother of one of Madame du Deffand's servants, who was in the service of the Earl of Carlisle.

[3] Lady Frances Seymour Conway, fourth daughter of first Earl of Hertford; m. (May 22, 1775) Henry Fiennes Pelham-Clinton, eldest son of second Duke of Newcastle. Lord Lincoln died in 1778, in his father's lifetime.

a apporté ce matin. J'ai peur que vous n'en serez pas exactement contente: Le couvercle de la Jatte est tres lourd et mal fait: mais la Jatte fait très bien sans dessus, et tout le reste est très bien. Si j'avois refusè de prendre le couvercle, il auroit fallu attendre encore six mois ou douze; car on fonde très rarement du verre à cet usage, étant passè de mode. Il faut que M. de Trudaine fasse venir la Caisse, qu'on laissera à la Douane de Calais à son adresse. Outre les Verres, vous y trouverez deux grilles et quatre livres de Thè; le tout empaquetè par M. Couty, que j'ai fait venir exprès chez moi.

Le Selwyn a passè toute la soireè d'hier chez moi, et meme soupè, c'est à dire a mangè des biscuits et moi des pommes cuites. Votre petit Ami[4] court la compagne: Aujourd'hui chez my Lady Spencer, demain chez les Ossory. Moi je ne compte de sortir au plutot avant la Semaine qui vient.

Ce Vendredy 5[5].

La main droite va mieux; j'ai otè la bottine, et j'écris gantè. Vous pouvez compter à M. le Duc d'Orleans cette nouvelle preuve de l'excellence des bottines. Dans mon fait c'est de la demonstration; cinque semaines au lieu de cinque mois et demy. Vous m'avez parlè dernierement d'un projet que vous aviez de diner au lieu de souper: je ne suis pas de cet avis là: Vous vous etes accoutoumèe depuis si longtems à votre methode ordinaire, que je ne scaurais croire q'un changement vous conviendroit mieux. Peutêtre si vous preniez un petit bouillon à la place de votre Thè, cela vous soutiendroit mieux, et vous empecheroit de trop manger le soir; mais je vous conseillerois pas de rien brusquer. Vous etes tres delicate, et il ne faut pas risquer un changement considerable tout d'un coup.

[4] John Craufurd, who was a correspondent of Madame du Deffand.
[5] So in MS.; *read* 6.

1591. To the Rev. William Cole.

Arlington Street, Jan. 9, 1775.

I every day intended to thank you for the copy of Nel Gwyn's letter, till it was too late; the gout came, and made me moult my goose-quill. The letter is very curious, and I am as well content as with the original.

It is lucky you do not care for news more recent than the Reformation. I should have none to tell you; nay, nor earlier neither. Mr. Strut's[1] second volume I suppose you have seen. He showed me two or three much better drawings from pictures in the possession of Mr. Ives[2]. One of them made me very happy: it is a genuine portrait of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and is the individual same face as that I guessed to be his in my Marriage of Henry VI. They are infinitely more like each other than any two modern portraits of one person by different painters. I have been laughed at for thinking the skull of Duke Humphrey at St. Alban's proved my guess; and yet it certainly does, and is the more like, as the two portraits represent him very bald, with only a ringlet of hair, as monks have. Mr. Strut is going to engrave his drawings.

Yours faithfully,

H. W.

1592. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, Jan. 9, 1775.

I write without having anything to say, but what I know you will like better than news. I am quite recovered of the gout, except in the hand I write with, and which you see

Letter 1591. — [1] Joseph Strutt (1749-1802), antiquary and artist. The work mentioned is his *Manners, Customs, Arms, Habits, &c. of the People of England.*

[2] John Ives (1751–1776), Suffolk Herald Extraordinary.

cannot be very bad. The bootikins have proved themselves to demonstration. I had the gout in both hands, both feet, both elbows, and one wrist, and yet could walk without a stick in less than a month, and have been abroad twice in less than five weeks. It came in each part as rapidly as it could, and went away so too; and though I had some acute pain, much less in quantity than in any fit these ten years. Now, if less pain, and five weeks instead of five months and a half, as the last fit was, be not demonstration, there is none in Euclid.

The bootikins do not cure the gout, but if they defer it, lessen it, shorten it, who would not wear them? Why, fine people, younger people, who will not condescend to lie like a mummy; nay, nor anybody else, for the physicians and apothecaries, who began by recommending them, now, finding they are a specific, cry them down—and will be believed, precisely because they lie; they say they weaken; it is false; I can at this moment stamp on the marble hearth with both feet with no more inconvenience than I did at five-and-twenty, which I never saw one other person that could do, who had the gout a twelvemonth before. I do this ten times a day, to convince people; yet, what is ocular proof against the assertion of a grave face and a tied wig? If weakness was the consequence, who would be weakened so soon as I, who have bones no bigger than a lark's? I want to send you a cargo of bootikins; tell me the shortest way of conveying them. Your brother is one of the bigoted infidels; can one wonder that the three professions make so many dupes, when pain cannot open the understanding? Sure the devil's three names of Satan, Beelzebub, and Lucifer, were given to him in his three capacities of priest, physician, and lawyer! It is certainly true that there are apothecaries in London who have given noxious drugs under the name of James's powders, to decry the latter. I did not

think there could be a *trade* so bad as a *profession*, till I heard that the fishmongers in town here fling away great quantities of fish that it may never be cheap. What a wicked monster is a great metropolis!

I rejoice that you have resolved to avow your *nepotism*: it may be a bar to your obtaining the Papacy, but sounds well in this Protestant country, and I am sure will turn out to your mind's satisfaction, though it may be a little interruption to your quiet.

This is a short letter, but I call it an intercalated one. There will probably be enough, and too much to send you soon—but till the Parliament meets, all is suspense! I hope decision will not follow *in haste*! The moment is very big; and if anybody is wise enough to see a quick solution of all the difficulties, they are much more intuitive than my comprehension.

Lord Lincoln [1] marries my cousin, Lady Frances Conway [2]; she is a sweet young woman in person, temper, and understanding, and deserves such vast fortune. Adieu!

1593. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, Jan. 12, 1775.

You wanted to see my handwriting again, Madam, and now you will be tired of it; but I have this instant received Miss Vernon's pretty fable and verses, and can I help thanking her and you as quick as possible? There is a natural simplicity in her fable, that pleases me infinitely more, than if she had gathered a nosegay of poetic words, and only disposed them in a new garland, as young shepherdesses that read romances generally do, and without genuine invention.

Letter 1592. — [1] Eldest son of Henry Clinton, Duke of Newcastle. *Walpole.*

[2] Fourth daughter of Francis Seymour Conway, Earl of Hertford, nephew of Catherine Shorter, Lady Walpole, first wife of Sir Robert. *Walpole.*

As she shows parts and observation, the embroidery will come of itself afterwards. To the praises she bestows on me, I am very sensible, because I am sure they flow from a kind and amiable heart,—rather, from a complimentary one; but pray, Madam, tell her that I have neither acquired fame nor can bestow it, and that my name is Horace, only because I had godfathers and godmothers, and not because I have the least resemblance to a very great poet so called, any more than I should have to the apostle, if I had been christened Matthew. When I am likened to my heathen predecessor, it only reminds me of my infinite inferiority, and would not be allowed anywhere but at the puppet-show-Parnassus at Bath-Easton. I have just got Mrs. Miller's bouquet of artificial flowers[1], and have only had time to dip upon it, and see how very ridiculous compliments undeserved may make one! You will there see how immortality is plentifully promised to riddles and *bouts-rimés*, and a jar dressed up with ribbons. I once did wish for fame, I own—now I dread it; for it is like diamonds, of little value, unless of the first water,—and who would be fine in Bristol stones?

Pray, Madam, send me all the productions of Ampthill. Everything is agreeable of one's own society, and when it means to go no farther. I think this is all that is left me that I care for, or have any eagerness about,—and I am sure that I read with any pleasure. What should I read else? I know all that can be told me of the periods I delight in. I can scarce read Grammont and Madame de Sévigné, because I know them by heart. Can I pore over American disputes, which I never did nor ever shall understand? Do I care for hearing how many ways Mr. Burke can make a mosaic pavement or an inlaid cabinet? Can

LETTER 1593. —[1] *Poetical Amusements at a Villa near Bath*, a selection from the compositions read at Bath-easton.

I be diverted with Mr. Cumberland's comedies, or Garrick's nonsensical epilogues? No! truly. I am almost as sick of our literature, as of our politics and politicians; and, therefore, if you have any charity, my Lady, send me all the Ampthilliana, or rather bring them to Grosvenor Place, which I promise to be reconciled to, and where we will not make a Helicon of tin and a Parnassus of pasteboard. Let us leave the whole Castalian state to the Bufos and Bufesses, and divert ourselves without trusting posterity with our secrets.

1594. To the Earl of Hardwicke.

My Lord, Arlington Street, Jan. 12th, 1775.

Though I was so unfortunate as to be able to send your Lordship an immediate answer to the honour you offered me[1], yet having company with me I could not do it in a manner satisfactory to myself, as I had not time to state to your Lordship the particular reasons I have for declining what would do so much credit to my press and me, as printing anything furnished by your Lordship.

I will not trouble you, my Lord, with recapitulating many private reasons that have induced me to put a stop to my press, which has not worked in a manner for these two years. I even two months ago gave my printer warning to provide for himself, having no farther use for him: and though it is true that I have retained him since, by the occasion I had for him as a secretary to write my letters during the incapacity of my hand in the gout, yet it is with no present thoughts of employing him again in his pro-

Letter 1594.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. George Pritchard.

[1] Lord Hardwicke asked Walpole to reprint at the Strawberry Hill Press the State Papers of Sir Dudley Carleton, first published by that Lord in 1757.

fession. But indeed the insurmountable difficulty I have in gratifying myself with the flattering employment of printing for your Lordship is this (and one material cause of my suspending my press)—I have been earnestly requested by a near relation to print a work, which was not agreeable to me to print, though offensive to nobody; and the chief argument I urged was the bulk of it. Now your Lordship's candour I am sure will do me the justice to allow that I deprive myself of one of my chief pleasures, that of contributing to the publication of historic pieces, when I deny myself the satisfaction of serving you in that light. I could not print them without exposing myself to a rupture with one of my own family. I trust your Lordship will not mention this, as I should not have uttered it, but to prove my inability of obeying you—for I could not content myself with pleading to you, my Lord, what has been another cause of my interrupting my press, the laziness and indifference to even literary amusements, which age and the gout have brought upon me. You would have tempted me, my Lord, to renew them, if such strong motives did not restrain me.

I beg to know what the *Catalogue* is your Lordship means. I conclude the *Anecdotes of Painting*; but I would not send them till I was sure.

The print of Monsieur de Choiseul is a general, but very imperfect likeness; with nothing of the countenance, and as little of his vivacity; the person is very much his. The present King of France is exceedingly like, my Lord; and like the Duke of Grafton too, as you have heard. I can scarce discover the least distant resemblance to the Queen, who is as strangely like the present Duchess of Grafton, though infinitely better.

I cannot at present, my Lord, recollect where there is any miniature or wax cast of my father, that is to be parted

with; if I can hear of any such thing your Lordship shall know.

I have the honour to be
With great respect,
My Lord,
Your Lordship's
Most obedient
Humble servant,
Hor. Walpole.

1595. To the Marquise du Deffand.

De Londres, ce 13 Janvier, 1775.

En toute veritè je vous assure que je n'ai pas pensè à vous faire des menaces. Je vous ai dit en badinant que je ne voulois vous ecrire de huit jours—et voila ou me fait tomber le malheur de ne pas écrire dans ma propre langue. Si je ne parle pas toujours d'un serieux phlegmatique, votre méfiance naturelle vous fait soupconner que je suis de mauvaise humeur—je ne scais pas de remede, et il faut se soumettre à ces contretems. Au moins vous voyez que je ne me fache pas aujourd'hui.

Non, assurement, mon cousin ne gardera pas votre Madame de Prie[1]. Vous me l'aviez offert, et je n'ai pas voulu vous l'oter—mais puisque vous la donnez, je pretends qu'elle est à Moi comme plus ancien en date. Ne vous donnez plus de peine sur Madame d'Olonne; vous en avez deja trop pris. Je vous prie seulement de me la faire acheter à la vente, si le priz ne passe pas cent Louis ou environ, ce qui seroit bien payer sa fantaisie; mais j'ai peur que je ne l'aurai pas. Il y a un Monsr d'Henri ou bien d'Heneri, demeurant dans la meme rue avec le Chevalier Lambert, et tout près de

Letter 1595.—Not in C.; now first printed (*verbatim et literatim*) from original in Walpole's handwriting in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis.

[1] A miniature.

De Londres
ce 13 Janv. 1775.

En toute verité je vous assure que je n'ai pas pensé à vous faire des menaces. Je vous ai dit en badinant que je ne voulois vous ecrire de huit jours — & voila ou me fait tomber le malheur de ne pas ecrire dans ma propre langue. Si je ne parle pas toujours d'un serieux phlegmatique, votre mefiance naturelle vous fait soupconner que je suis de mauvaise humeur — je ne scais pas de remede, & il faut se soumettre à ces contretems. Au moins vous voyez que je ne me fache pas aujourd'hui.

Non, assurement, mon cousin ne gardera pas votre Madame de Prie. Vous me l'aviez offert, & je n'ai pas voulu vous l'oter — mais puisque vous la donnez, je pretends qu'elle est à moi comme plus ancien en date. Ne vous donnez plus de peine sur Madame D'Olonne; vous en avez deja trop pris. Je vous prie seulement de me la faire acheter à la vente, si le prix ne passe pas cent Louis ou environ, ce qui seroit bien payer sa fantaisie; mais j'ai peur que je ne l'aurai pas. Il y a un Monsr d'Henri ou bien d'Heneri, demeurant dans la meme rue avec le Chevalier Lambert, & tout pres de l'hotel de Richelieu, & qui achete à tort & à travers tous les ouvrages soi disants de Pelitot, qui me l'emportera, & j'en serai fachè. Il y avoit encore un monsieur

LETTER OF HORACE WALPOLE TO MADAME DU DEFFAND

que j'ai vû chez vous, & dont j'ai oublié le nom, mais il a de gr
sourcils noirs; il achete aussi des Petitots, & me proposa un jo
venir voir ses tableaux; mais c'est trop vous importuner, & j
vous en parlerai plus. Je suis encore fachè de vous avoir de
la vie de Ninon, puisque elle est ancienne: c'est sans doute c
dont j'ai tiré ma feuille dans le Monde, & que je scais par c

Je viens enfin de recevoir de la part de l'Executeur
:mentaire de Monsr Taaffe Trois cent vingt sept livres Sterling
Shelings & six sous, sur le compte de Madame la Marechale d
Mirepoix, le dernier paiement qu'elle touchera. L'Entremet
s'est payé cinque guinées, & c'est tres raisonable — donc il n
reste pour Madame que trois cent ving deux livres, sept Sh
& six sous. Je crois que la meilleure maniere de faire touch
somme à Mad. la Marechale, ce sera si Mon Cousin veut bien
la complaisance de la lui paier, & que son Banquier s'adre
moi pour le remboursement — mais alors il faudra que M
de Mirepoix paie à Mon Cousin ce qu'il perdra par les frai
l'echange, car je ne veux point qu'il paie la Dame à son p
depens. Je vous prie d'arranger cela avec lui avant que d'en
à la Marechale.

Je trouve l'epigramme de Voltaire fort plaisant. On ne m'a pa
les trois Exellamations; & M. Clarges, que je scais arrivè, ne m
rendu la Ninon, mais je la lui demanderai, si je n'en entends pa

On m'a dit hier que notre petit Ami a la Goute chez My La

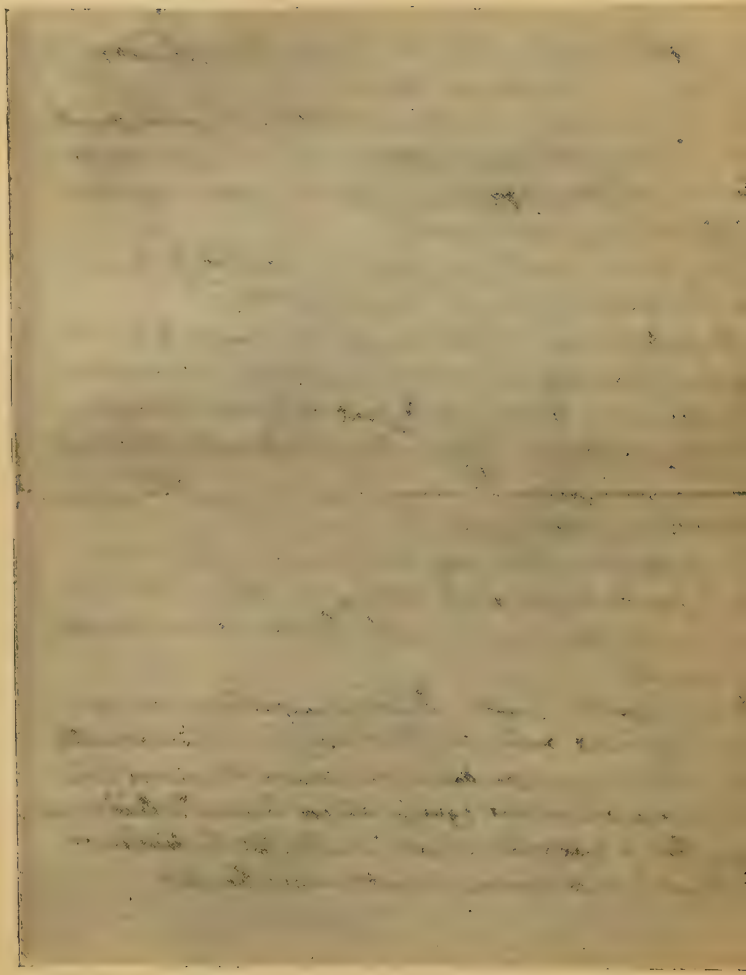
Spenser, & le piè sur un tabouret. Mad. Greville est hardie si elle repond de ce qu'il fera au printems.

Je vous prie d'assurer Mad. de Jonsac combien je suis sensible à son souvenir; c'est une des Personnes en France pour qui j'ai le plus destime, bien que je n'y aie pas fait quatre vingt dix Conoissances comme M. Conway.

J'oubliois de vous dire que je suis tres content des Vers du Chevalier dans la Tasse. Tout ce qu'il fait est joli.

Ma goute s'en va on ne peut pas plus lentement. Je marche tres mal, je monte mal un escalier & je descends avec plus de difficulté encore. Je ne quitte le gant de la main droite que pour ecrire, & j'ai fait demander permission à la Princesse Amelie de le garder quand j'aurai l'honneur de jouer avec Elle Lundy. Je remets ma parfaite guerison au mois prochain, quand je compte d'aller passer huit jours à une Campagne de Mylord Hertford à deux pas de la Mer, & à vingt lieues de Londres. L'air de la Mer me fait autant de bien que les bottines, & mille fois plus rapidement.

Je suis tres sterile aujourdhui. La Campagne politique s'ouvrira la Semaine qui vient, & alors la Ville se remplira. J'ai des nouvelles assez amusantes pour mes parens, mais comme elles ne sont point politiques & se conserveront, & que je n'ai pas le tems de leur ecrire aujourdhui, je les garderai jusqu'à Mardy. C'est l'histoire d'une Societé poetique dont je me suis fort amusé. bonsoir.



l'hotel de Richelieu, et qui achete à tort et à travers tous les ouvrages soi disants de Petitot, qui me l'emportera, et j'en serai fachè. Il y avait encore un monsieur que j'ai vù chez vous, et dont j'ai oubliè le nom, mais il a de grands sourcils noirs; il achete aussi des Petitots, et me proposa un jour de venir voir ses tableaux; mais c'est trop vous importuner, et je ne vous en parlerai plus. Je suis encore fachè de vous avoir demandé la vie de Ninon, puisqu'elle est ancienne: c'est sans doute celle dont j'ai tirè ma feuille dans le Monde[2], et que je sais par cœur.

Je viens enfin de recevoir de la part de l'Executeur Testamentaire de M. Taaffe Trois cent ving sept livres Sterling douze Shellings et six Sous, sur le compte de Madame la Marechale de Mirepoix, le dernier paiement qu'elle touchera. L'Entremetteur s'est payè cinque guinèes, et c'est très raisonable—donc il n'en reste pour Madame que trois cent ving deux livres, sept Shelings, et six sous. Je crois que la meilleure manière de faire toucher cette somme à Mad. la Marechale, ce sera si mon cousin veut bien avoir la Complaisance de la lui paier, et que son Banquier s'adresse à moi pour le remboursement—mais alors il faudra que Madame de Mirepoix paie à mon cousin ce qu'il perdra par les frais de l'echange, car je ne veux pas qu'il paie la Dame à son propre depens. Je vous prie d'arranger cela avec lui avant que d'en parler à la Marechale.

Je trouve l'epigramme de Voltaire fort plaisant. On ne m'a pas envoyé les trois Exclamations[3]; et M. Clarges, que je scais arrivé, ne m'a pas rendu la Ninon, mais je la lui demanderai, si je n'entends pas parler.

On m'a dit hier que notre petit ami a la Goute chez my Lady Spencer, et le piè sur un tabouret. Mad. Greville est hardie si elle repondra de ce qu'il fera au printems.

[2] *The World*, No. xxviii. See *Works of Lord Orford*, vol. i. pp. 169–73.

[3] The title of an epigram on the journalist Suard.

Je vous prie d'assurer Mad. de Jonsac combien je suis sensible à son Souvenir; c'est Une des personnes en France pour qui j'ai le plus d'estime, bien que je n'y aie pas fait quatre vingt dix Connoissances, comme M. Conway[4].

J'oubliois de vous dire que je suis tres content des Vers du Chevalier dans la Tasse. Tout ce qu'il fait est joli.

Ma Goute s'en va on ne peut pas plus lentement. Je marche tres mal, je monte mal un escalier et je descends avec plus de difficultè encore. Je ne quitte le gant de la main droite que pour ecrire, et j'ai fait demander permission à la Princesse Amelie de le garder quand j'aurai l'honneur de jouer avec Elle Lundy.

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Je suis très sterile aujourd'hui. La campagne politique s'ouvrira la Semaine qui vient, et alors la ville se remplira. J'ai des nouvelles assez amusantes pour mes parens, mais comme elles ne sont point politiques et se conserveront, et que je n'ai pas le tems de leur ecrire aujourd hui, je les garderai jusqu'à Mardy. C'est l'histoire d'une Societè poètique dont je me suis fort amusè[5]. Bon soir.

1596. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway and the Countess of Ailesbury.

Arlington Street, Jan. 15, 1775.

You have made me very happy by saying your journey to Naples is laid aside. Perhaps it made too great an impression on me; but you must reflect, that all my life

[4] 'Savez-vous combien il connaît déjà de personnes dans Paris? Quatre-vingt-dix. Il n'est nullement sauvage.' (Madame du Deffand to Horace Walpole, Jan. 3, 1775.)

[5] See the following letter.

I have satisfied myself with your being perfect, instead of trying to be so myself. I don't ask you to return, though I wish it: in truth, there is nothing to invite you. I don't want you to come and breathe fire and sword against the Bostonians, like that second Duke of Alva, the inflexible Lord George Germain; or to anathematize the court and all its works, like the incorruptible Burke, who scorns lucre, except when he can buy a hundred thousand acres from naked Caribs for a song. I don't want you to do anything like a party-man. I trust you think of every party as I do, with contempt, from Lord Chatham's mustard-bowl down to Lord Rockingham's hartshorn. All, perhaps, will be tried in their turns, and yet, if they had genius, might not be mighty enough to save us. From some ruin or other I think nobody can, and what signifies an option of mischiefs?

An account is come of the Bostonians having voted an army of sixteen thousand men, who are to be called *minute-men*, as they are to be ready at a minute's warning. Two directors or commissioners, I don't know what they are called, are appointed. There has been too a kind of mutiny in the Fifth Regiment. A soldier was found drunk on his post. Gage, in this time of *danger*, thought rigour necessary, and sent the fellow to a court-martial. They ordered two hundred lashes. The General ordered them to improve their sentence. Next day it was published in the *Boston Gazette*. He called them before him, and required them on oath to abjure the communication: three officers refused. Poor Gage is to be scapegoat[1], not for this, but for what was a reason against employing him, incapacity. I wonder at the precedent! Howe[2] is talked of for his successor.—Well, I have done with *you*!—Now I shall go gossip with Lady Aylesbury.

LETTER 1596.—[1] Gage was not deprived of command on this occasion. [2] Major-General Hon. William Howe; he was sent out with reinforcements for Gage in March 1775.

You must know, Madam, that near Bath is erected a new Parnassus, composed of three laurels, a myrtle-tree, a weeping-willow, and a view of the Avon, which has been new christened Helicon. Ten years ago there lived a Madam Riggs, an old rough humourist who passed for a wit; her daughter, who passed for nothing, married to a Captain Miller, full of good-natured officiousness. These good folks were friends of Miss Rich[3], who carried me to dine with them at Bath-Easton, now Pindus. They caught a little of what was then called taste, built and planted, and begot children, till the whole caravan were forced to go abroad to retrieve. Alas! Mrs. Miller is returned a beauty, a genius, a Sappho, a tenth Muse, as romantic as Mademoiselle Scudéri, and as sophisticated as Mrs. Vesey. The Captain's fingers are loaded with cameos, his tongue runs over with *virtù*, and that both may contribute to the improvement of their own country, they have introduced *bouts-rimés* as a new discovery. They hold a Parnassus fair every Thursday, give out rhymes and themes, and all the flux of quality at Bath contend for the prizes. A Roman vase dressed with pink ribbons and myrtles receives the poetry, which is drawn out every festival; six judges of these Olympic games retire and select the brightest compositions, which the respective successful acknowledge, kneel to Mrs. Calliope Miller, kiss her fair hand, and are crowned by it with myrtle, with—I don't know what. You may think this is fiction, or exaggeration. Be dumb, unbelievers! The collection is printed, published.—Yes, on my faith! There are *bouts-rimés* on a buttered muffin, made by her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland; receipts to make them by Corydon the venerable, *alias* George Pitt; others very pretty, by Lord Palmerston[4]; some by Lord Carlisle:

[3] Daughter of Sir Robert Rich, and sister to the second wife of George, Lord Lyttelton. *Walpole.*

[4] Henry Temple (1739–1802), second Viscount Palmerston.

many by Mrs. Miller herself, that have no fault but wanting metre; and immortality promised to her without end or measure. In short, since folly, which never ripens to madness but in this hot climate, ran distracted, there never was anything so entertaining or so dull—for you cannot read so long as I have been telling.

Jan. 17.

Before I could finish this, I received your dispatches by Sir Thomas Clarges, and a most entertaining letter in three tomes. It is being very dull, not to be able to furnish a quarter so much from your own country—but what can I do? You are embarked in a new world, and I am living on the scraps of an old one of which I am tired. The best I can do is to reply to your letter, and not attempt to amuse you when I have nothing to say. I think the Parliament meets to-day, or in a day or two—but I hope you are coming. —Your brother says so, and Madame du Deffand says so; and sure it is time to leave Paris, when you know ninety of the inhabitants[5]. There seems much affectation in those that will not know you[6]; and affectation is always a littleness—it has been even rude; but to be sure the rudeness one feels least is that which is addressed to one before there has been any acquaintance.

Ninon[7] came, because, on Madame du Deffand's mentioning it, I concluded it a new work, and am disappointed. I can say this by heart. The picture of Madame de Prie[8], which you don't seem to value (and so Madame du Deffand says), I believe I shall dispute with you; I think it charming, but when offered to me years ago, I would not take it—it was now given to you a little *à mon intention*.

[5] See p. 132, note 4.
[6] The Duke de Choiseul. *Walpole.*
[7] The Life of Ninon de l'Enclos. *Walpole.*
[8] It is now at Strawberry Hill. *Walpole.*

I am sorry that, amongst all the verses you have sent me, you should have forgotten what you commend the most, *Les trois exclamations*: I hope you will bring them with you. Voltaire's are intolerably stupid, and not above the level of officers in garrison. Some of M. de Pezay's[9] are very pretty, though there is too much of them; and in truth I had seen them before. Those on Madame de la Vallière pretty too, but one is a little tired of Venus and the Graces. I am most pleased with your own[10]—and if you have a mind to like them still better, make Madame du Deffand show you mine[11], which are neither French, nor measure, nor metre. She is unwilling to tell me so; which diverts me. Yours are really genteel and new.

I envy you the Russian anecdotes[12] more than M. de Chamfort's fables, of which I know nothing; and as you say no more, I conclude I lose not much. The stories of Sir Charles[13] are so far not new to me, that I heard them of him from abroad after he was mad: but I believe no mortal of his acquaintance ever heard them before; nor did they at all correspond with his former life, with his treatment of his wife, or his history with Mrs. Woffington, *qui*

[9] Alexandre Frédéric Jacques Masson (1741–1777), Marquis de Pezay.

[10] Miss Berry notes that Conway's lines were 'sent with a porcelain *déjeuné* to the Vicomtesse de Cambis at the beginning of the new year, when it was the universal custom at Paris to interchange small presents known by the name of *étrennes*.' The verses were as follow:—

'L'étrenne qu'on vous offre ici
N'est rare ni mignonne;
Mais les vétilles ont du prix
Quand c'est le cœur qui donne.

'De plus encore pour satisfaire
Au scrupule le plus sévère,
Il faut penser qu'en acceptant
C'est vous qui faites le présent.'

[11] These lines do not appear. *Walpole.*

[12] A MS. account of the revolution which placed Catherine II on the throne, by Claude Carloman de Rulhière (1735–1791), who had been attached to the French embassy in St. Petersburg. Rulhière occasionally read his anecdotes out loud in private houses. He claimed to give a full account of the whole transaction, and spared no one. His work caused great annoyance to the Empress, who tried in vain to have it suppressed. The anecdotes were printed in 1797, the year after the Empress's death.

[13] Sir Charles Hanbury Williams. *Walpole.*

n'était pas dupe. I say nothing on the other stories you tell me of billets dropped[14], *et pour cause.*

I think I have touched all your paragraphs, and have nothing new to send you in return. In truth, I go nowhere but into private rooms; for I am not enough recovered to re-launch into the world, when I have so good an excuse for avoiding it. The bootikins have done wonders; but even two or three such victories will cost too dear. I submit very patiently to my lot. I am old and broken, and it never was my system to impose upon myself when one can deceive nobody else. I have spirits enough for my use, that is, amongst my friends and contemporaries: I like young people and their happiness for everything but to live with; but I cannot learn their language, nor tell them old stories, of which I must explain every step as I go. Politics, the proper resource of age, I detest—I am contented, but see few that are so—and I never will be led by any man's self-interest. A great scene is opening, of which I cannot expect to see the end; I am pretty sure not a happy end—so that, in short, I am determined to think the rest of my life but a postscript: and as this has been too long an one, I will wish you good night, repeating what you know already, that the return of you three is the most agreeable prospect I expect to see realized. Adieu!

1597. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Jan. 15, 1775.

I am glad I opened the letter myself, Madam; I would not have had Kirgate see it for the world, and therefore

[14] This alludes to circumstances Mr. Conway mentions as having taken place at a ball at Versailles. *Walpole.*—A young Vicomte d'Houdetot picked up a letter written by a lady to her lover, and made its contents public. He was in consequence forbidden by the Queen to appear again at the court balls. (See *Correspondance entre Marie Thérèse et le Comte de Mercy-Argenteau*, vol. ii. pp. 287–8.)

attempt to write an answer in my lap with only one hand. If no man is a hero in the eyes of his *valet de chambre*, what must a miserable author be in those of his printer! You think you have sent me some very pretty verses, Madam, and so you have—very pretty indeed; for poetry can create, paint, or call from the grave, and the less solidity there is in the vision, the more enchanting are its hues: but if truth presents its glass, the rainbow disappears, and nothing remains but what I have found, *Verses on a Death's head*!—and *my immortal fame* may walk perhaps to the publication of the next monthly magazine. In serious earnest, I do think it is such an impertinence in every little scribbler in a parish to accept new year's gifts of immortal fame from their friends, that, at the risk of ingratitude, I must protest against the practice.

As an antiquary, Madam, I am better diverted. I can but imagine how the grave professors of our mystery will be embarrassed a thousand years hence (which is all the portion of futurity in my disposal) to discover who the immortal man was that will live only in your Ladyship's lines. Nay, what if the reverse of your compliment should happen, and the author should only be discovered by his printer! Such mortifications have happened to as great German and Batavian wits as I am, and therefore I beg, Madam, you will treat my co-labourer Kirgate with more respect, as, should fame happen to have a library of rare editions, I may be admitted there only under his auspices. Upon the whole, to your Ladyship and him I commit the whole reversion of my future renown, where I am sure it will be in better hands than in my own; and I do hereby appoint and declare my said loving Muse and faithful printer joint executrix and executor of this my last will and testament, written all with my own hand this fifteenth day of January, in the first and last year of my immortality, and

in the no less immortal reign of G. III, by the want of grace late King of France and America, &c.

1598. To the Duke of Gloucester.

Sir, Jan. 17, 1775.

Your Royal Highness's commands are so much a law to me, that though deeply conscious of the inequality of my understanding to so arduous a question, and full of fears lest a word should drop from me that should lead your Royal Highness into any step prejudicial to yourself, or to the Princesses [1], your daughters, I venture to lay my thoughts at your Royal Highness's feet, only entreating, if they appear to have any weight in them, that your Royal Highness would not adopt them till they have been approved by better judgements than mine.

Before I speak, Sir, on the question whether your Royal Highness should take any measure in Parliament for procuring a provision for your family, permit me, Sir, to state an apprehension that has struck me from the conversation I had the honour of having with you the last time I saw you. Your Royal Highness expressed doubts whether there might not be some idea of calling the legitimacy of your children in question. Alas! Sir, if it is possible that any human mind should have such an idea, would not a motion in Parliament be the likeliest method of bringing that horrid intention into execution? The Parliament is so infamous, that it could, I firmly believe, be brought to lend its assistance to anything. As your Royal Highness's hint of carrying any part of your cause thither has not alarmed, may one not suppose that not alarming, it pleases? What will either House not do? What has either refused to do? Consider,

Letter 1598.—[1] Princess Sophia Matilda and Princess Caroline Augusta Maria. The latter was born in 1774 and died on March 14, 1775.

Sir, how many would be glad to colour over their mean desertion or neglect of you by calling into question the validity of your marriage, and consequently of the birth of your children. Shame is apt to fly to crimes for a veil. I have no difficulty in speaking on this question: your Royal Highness must authenticate the legitimacy of your children, before you think of a provision for them. I rest it there, Sir, not to trouble you with unnecessary words.

In regard to the question your Royal Highness was pleased to put to me, on some motion for a provision, I will consider it in two lights; in the first, whether it would be proper for any Lords to take it up. This, Sir, I am sorry to say, lies in a small compass, and extends to a very few Lords in the opposition; your Royal Highness knows already my opinion, that a few opposing Lords would only do your cause signal mischief, and would give the pretended sanction, that I fear is wished for, to doing nothing for you; and, therefore, if I am not wrong, not to be attempted. The Duke of R.[2], with whom I have talked, fears nothing, Sir, but hurting your cause. He is so personally obnoxious, that he thinks a motion from your Royal Highness and himself would only be considered, certainly represented, as factious; his Grace's tenderness and delicacy would not suffer him to add, that none of his friends would support him, though he knows they would not. What could be expected, Sir, from a measure so generally abandoned? When could it be revived with success, unless, not only times, but men should be totally altered?

I can then, Sir, have but one idea left, the same I suggested on Monday, if your Royal Highness should still think the present season a proper one, though it is probable that nothing will be stirred this year in relation to an increase of the revenue of the crown. I must throw myself on your

[2] The Duke of Richmond.

Royal Highness's great goodness and generosity before I presume to utter what I have further to say. You have indeed, Sir, commanded me, given me leave to speak what I think, and I dare not at such a crisis but speak what I think. Be not offended, Sir; my heart burns to serve you, but I will not waste your time on my idle apologies. My sincerity must be proved by my actions.

I have said, Sir, how infamous I think Parliaments. I have not so bad an opinion of all mankind in general. Humanity can operate when interest is silent. It seems essential, in my opinion, to any future service, that your Royal Highness may reap from a motion in Parliament, that the cry of mankind should be raised loud in your favour. That can only be excited by stating your sufferings and by being able to prove that you have done everything in your power to reconcile his Majesty, and to deprecate his anger. The plan I should humbly offer to your Royal Highness for your conduct will best explain my meaning, laying it before you, Sir, with the utmost deference and diffidence; far from presuming to dictate, but obeying from perfect submission.

I should begin, Sir, by writing an ostensible letter to the King, asking pardon for a natural youthful error, regretting his displeasure, entreating a return of his fraternal affections, stating my own ill-health, and how much that must be augmented by his resentment, and at least imploring he would give that relief to a sick body and wounded mind of promising he would make a proper provision for persons so dear to me as my wife and children. As heightening the picture a little would not add to your Royal Highness's disorder, I would beg the comfort of taking leave of him in so critical a situation of my health. If this should have no effect, Sir, I would just before leaving England, in my place in the House of Lords, acquaint their Lordships, that

I was grieved his Majesty was so much offended at a youthful error, which, as it was neither repugnant to religion nor law at that time, I had flattered myself had not been irremissible; that I had done but what the heir of the crown, James II, when Duke of York, had done, and been forgiven, and what had very frequently been done by other princes of the royal blood, and by kings of England themselves; that I had never refused any match that had been proposed, and had only chosen for myself when no wife had been sought for me; that I had preferred legal matrimony to the dissoluteness of youth; that I had selected a woman of blameless virtue, and that I had done what their Lordships could not disapprove,—I had chosen a lady from their own class, into which Princes of the blood used to marry. I would then acquaint them with the steps I had in vain taken for reconciliation. I would entreat them to be mediators with the King for remission of my fault in marrying without his approbation: I would acquaint them with the precarious state of my health, which obliged me to leave the kingdom and my family unprovided for, and I would beg them, as Christian Peers and his Majesty's Great Council, to endeavour to repair the breaches in the royal family; and if anything should happen to me, to intercede with his Majesty's piety and forgiveness to make a suitable provision for two innocent young Princesses of his own blood, who had never offended him; and I would add, that to avoid any suspicion of intending to disturb his Majesty's mind, I declined making any present Parliamentary application for my children, but would leave to the wisdom of their Lordships to take the most proper time of being intercessors for me and my family with my royal brother. This address, Sir, to the Lords I would deliver in writing, and would desire it might be entered on the Journals; I would then retire and leave them.

But now, Sir, after taking such a latitude of liberty, whom shall I entreat to be intercessor for me with your Royal Highness? Your own excellent heart, Sir. No, you cannot be offended at zeal, even if it has passed its due bounds. On my soul, Sir, I think that what I have said is the best method I can desire for obtaining your Royal Highness's object. No high-flown loyalty nor grovelling self-interest has dictated my words. If Parliament is against you, the majority of mankind must be gained over by acting as they would advise. If I advise you, Sir, to stoop beyond what your Royal Highness would suggest, it is for the sake of your children, who will plead when I fail. If you are in the right in the world's eye, whatever it costs your feeling, it will be of use to them. The circumstances may change; your health, I trust in God, will be re-established, and the more sacrifices you have made, the higher you will stand in the esteem of mankind. I still flatter myself you will enjoy all the happiness and dignity due to your virtues and birth. I am not likely to see that moment, nor should I profit by it if I did,—but I have done my duty as your true servant, and if I was now at my last hour, I could not give you any other advice than what I now presume to lay at your feet.

P.S. If your Royal Highness should deem this advice timid, I beg, Sir, it may be tried by this test, whether your Royal Highness thinks that any one of your enemies would be glad I had given this advice: undoubtedly, Sir, the more you take care to be in the right yourself, the more you put those who hurt you with the King in the wrong.

1599. To the Marquise du Deffand.

De Londres, ce 19 Janvier, 1775.

Je puis vous assurer avec la plus grande veritè que non seulement mes parens sont infiniment contents de vous, mais qu'ils vous admirent et qu'ils vous aiment autant que vous le méritez. C'est ce qu'ils repetent trop souvent pour que j'en doute. De leur cotè quelle raison d'etre contents! Jamais on n'a tant fait pour des Etrangers! Il me paroit que M. Conway seroit charmé de s'etablir a Paris. Oui, je leur ferai force questions; mais ils ont bien passe le cercle de mes Connoissances.

Votre menagement poli pour mes couplets m'a fort diverti. Je m'attendois à vous entendre crier qu'ils etoient les plus plats et les plus ridicules du monde. Vous n'avez jamais eu à vous reprocher trop de complaisance pour mes ouvrages — pourquoi epagner mes vers Français? Pensez vous que je les ai crû bons? Je scavais bien qu'ils etoient detestables. C'est mon cousin qui en fait de jolis — je trouve tres jolis ceux qu'il a fait pour Madame de Cambis. J'ai trouvé ceux de votre fête fort bien aussi, cependant pas admirables. Mais il n'y a rien ou nous differons davantage qu'en fait de vers. J'ai tort sans doute, car assurement vous devez juger votre langue mieux que moi.

Permettez vous que faute d'autre Matière, je remplisse le reste de ma lettre avec des nouvelles Politiques pour mon Cousin? Voilà donc que les affaires en Amerique vont au plus mal. On y envoye encore trois autres Regiments. On va demander au parlement, qui s'est assemblè aujourd'hui, six mille Matelots dont on n'a pas voulu il y a un mois. Cela ne paroit pas fort consequent — mais voici ce qui est bien plus etrange, et qui n'a pas l'air guerrier. On annonca

Letter 1599.—Not in C.; now first printed (*verbatim et literatim*) from original in Walpole's hand-writing in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis.

hier par autoritè, c'est a dire par la sienne, que my Lord Chatham doit se présenter à la Chambre des Pairs pour faire une proposition. On a etè tres curieux de scavoir ce que ce devoit etre que cette Proposition, et on assure que la voici. Autorisè par le Docteur Franklin (mon cousin vous dira qui c'est) le seigneur Chatham doit offrir au Roi de la part des Colonies trois cent cinquante mille livres Sterling par an, moyennant l'abolition des Taxes et des Edits qui gravent l'Amerique. On pretend qu'on s'en mocquera — cependant on rit à contre-cœur.

My Lord North a presentè ce matin à la Chambre un Cahier énorme de papiers Américains, demandant qu'on les examine aujourdhui en huit.

Vous voila aussi savante que pas un Politique dans nos Caffès. Hier la Cour était en gala jour de la Reine. Les habits etoient d'une magnificence extraordinaire, et les plumes des Dames un peu Emule des Votres. A trois heures après midy arriva un brouillard si epais que personne ne scait trouver son carosse, et grand fut le bruit, l'embarras qui survint, avec beaucoup de dommage fait aux Equipages. Le Valet du Ministre de Prusse renversa à coups de poing un Grenadier à la Porte du Palais; le ministre se plaint au Colonel de ce qu'on s'était assurè de la personne du Laquais. 'Monsieur, dit le colonel, que croyez vous qu'on eut fait à un Anglois qui eut frappè un grenadier à la porte du Palais de Berlin?' Nous sommes plus polis; on a relaché le Domestique.

Voila un Echantillon d'une lettre Angloise. Je ne crois pas que vous demanderez une Suite.

Le 20.

Tout est changè aujourd'hui: on dit que my Lord Chatham va demander qu'on augmente l'Armèe par terre et par mer. Je ne saurai la Veritè qu'après la Poste partie, ce qui est plus sûr, c'est ce que le Ministère s'est décidé pour la Guerre, et qu'on menace les Colonies d'une punition tres rude.

Vos emeraudes coutent cinq Louis et demy. Il me semble que mes lettres sont comme les Cours, remplis de grandes et de petites choses.

1600. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, Jan. 21, 1775.

No; I will never read nonsense again with a settled resolution of being diverted! The *Miscellany* from Bath-Easton is ten degrees duller than a magazine, and, which is wondrous, the noble authors it adds to my *Catalogue* are the best of this foolish Parnassus. There is one very pretty copy by Lord Palmerston; and the Duchess of Northumberland has got very jollily through her task. I have scarce been better diverted by Dr. Johnson's *Tour to the Western Isles*. What a heap of words to express very little! and though it is the least cumbrous of any style he ever used, how far from easy and natural! He hopes nobody but is glad that a boatful of sacrilege, a diverting sin! was shipwrecked. He believes in second sight, and laughs at poor Pennant for credulity! The King sent for the book in MS., and then wondering, said, 'I protest, Johnson seems to be a Papist and a Jacobite!'—so he did not know why he had been made to give him a pension!

I must cross the sea, Madam, if I tell you anything better, and so I will. One of the ladies to the Queen of France announced to her that the Comtesse d'Artois was breeding. The Queen was a little piqued and envious; and to conceal it said, 'I wonder what the child will be called?' The lady answered, 'I hope, Madam, *le Précurseur*.'

This story is only the precursor of one ten thousand times better, which I reserved. The Comte d'Artois, forgetting that his brother is King, treats him with all the familiarity of their nursery. It was thought necessary to correct this;

and M. de Maurepas was commissioned to give the hint. Being urged, he said the King would grow offended. 'Well,' said the Prince, 'and if he is, *que peut-il me faire?*' '*Vous pardonner, Monseigneur,*' replied the minister. If you don't admire this more than any reply in your Diogenes Laertius and ancient authors, I will never tell your Ladyship another modern story.

Well! I am come back to England, and here I find no bad saying of an English Queen. The crowd at the Birthday was excessive, and had squeezed, and shoved, and pressed upon the Queen in the most hoyden manner. As she went out of the Drawing-room, somebody said in flattery, 'The crowd was very great.'—'Yes,' said the Queen, 'and wherever one went, the Queen was in everybody's way.'

I have written this since I came home to-night, Thursday, on my way towards Saturday's post, that I might not forget the *bons mots* I had collected for my gazette. To-morrow, I expect, will produce longer speeches.

I know what I know. To-morrow is to happen a great event[1]—I will not tell you what, till I know myself what it does produce. If it was not too late for the post, I would send away my letter this instant, that I might keep your Ladyship and Lordship in expectation for a whole night. Now I think of it, I can send it away to-morrow, and keep all Ampthill in equal suspense. I believe I shall—I don't know whether I shall or not—well, I will consider of it.

Saturday evening[2].

Oh, the pretty easy affectionate verses! but I beg your pardon for not returning them last night: I had not time, for I had dined out, and did not receive them till the post

LETTER 1600.—[1] Lord Chatham's motion to address the King for the recall of the troops from Boston.

[2] Hitherto printed as a separate letter. (See *Notes and Queries*, April 14, 1900.)

was gone. But the great event—well, it must stay,—I cannot drop Lord Ossory so. Madam, madam, if your heart did not cry its eyes out, it is rock and flint, and all the hard things ladies' hearts used to be made of. Mine, that has hardly any eyes or ears left, was charmed with the harmony and touched with the sensibility. I forgive the dairy next door to the hospital, and don't wonder that

> With such a companion to tend a few sheep,
> To rise up and play, and to lie down and sleep[3],

you have no taste for anything but milking cows. The ten last lines have more feeling and sentiment than ever were written by lovers, and are a better sermon in behalf of marriage than all that has been preached from St. Paul to St. Whitfield. I have not kept a copy, because I never break my trust, but I do ask them seriously, only desiring the first line, which has a foot too much, may be shortened, and they will be perfect, which they ought to be, when they are so near it.

Alas! the great event was addled, or came to little. I had been told that Lord Chatham was commissioned by Dr. Franklin to offer the King 350,000*l.* a year from America if the offensive bills were repealed. The ministers thought he was to ask for an increase of force, so their intelligence was at last no better than mine! But, indeed, who could guess what he would do? He did appear, and did move to address for a recall of the troops from Boston, a very Pindaric transition from the first step towards a pacification to the last! In heroic poems it is a rule to begin in the middle, and great poets and great orators are very like in more instances than one. He was very hostile, and so was Lord Camden; but the generals being braver than the troops, some of the latter ran away,

[3] From John Byrom's verses beginning, 'My time, O ye Muses, was happily spent.'

as Colonel Coventry and Cornet Grosvenor. The numbers were 68 to 18. The Duke of Cumberland, who would have joined his regiment, if it had been raised, to the vanquished, was among the slain; but in truth the subject is a little too serious for joking. The war on America is determined on. Four regiments more are ordered thither, and every hostile measure is to be pursued. The wise measures of last year have already begotten a civil war. What that will beget,

The child that is unborn will rue!

If Lord Chatham said true yesterday, the ministers are already checkmated and have not a move to make.

Pray, Madam, remember I tell you stories about the children in the wood and Lord Hardwicke, and Barry[4], and Princess Amelie and twenty others which I have not time for now, for I have more business of one body's or other, than Lord North, and do rather more.

I will only say now that I am *becoptied*[5] at last, enlisted in Mrs. Weesey's[6] academy, and am to go thither to-morrow se'nnight to hear a Mr. Tig-he repeat parts of Mr. Jephson's[7] tragedy, which I am persuaded is very good, and so good that I wish I could hear it all at once; but one might as well sit down to read Bysshe's *Art of Poetry*, as hear scraps of a plot one does not know. But I must obey; good night, Arria and Pætus without a Nero!

[4] James Barry (1741–1806), the painter.

[5] See letter to Lady Ossory of Jan. 24, 1775.

[6] Mrs. Vesey.

[7] Robert Jephson (1736–1803), Master of the Horse to the Viceroy of Ireland. His tragedy *Braganza* was produced with success at Drury Lane in February 1775. He also wrote a tragedy founded on Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, and entitled *The Count of Narbonne*.

1601. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Jan. 22, 1775.

After the magnificent overture for peace from Lord Chatham, that I announced to Madame du Deffand, you will be most impatient for my letter. *Ohimè!* you will be sadly disappointed. Instead of drawing a circle with his wand round the House of Lords, and ordering them to pacify America, on the terms he prescribed before they ventured to quit the circumference of his commands, he brought a ridiculous, uncommunicated, unconsulted motion for addressing the King immediately to withdraw the troops from Boston, as an earnest of lenient measures. The opposition stared and shrugged; the courtiers stared and laughed. His own two or three adherents left him, except Lord Camden and Lord Shelburne, and except Lord Temple, who is not his adherent, and was not there. Himself was not much animated, but very hostile; particularly on Lord Mansfield, who had taken care not to be there. He talked of three millions of Whigs in America, and told the ministers they were checkmated and had not a move left to make. Lord Camden was as strong. Lord Suffolk was thought to do better than ever, and Lord Lyttelton's declamation was commended as usual. At last, Lord Rockingham, very punily, and the Duke of Richmond joined and supported the motion; but at eight at night it was rejected by 68 to 18, though the Duke of Cumberland voted for it.

This interlude would be only entertaining, if the scene was not so totally gloomy. The Cabinet have determined on civil war, and regiments are going from Ireland and our West Indian islands. On Thursday the plan of the war is to be laid before both Houses.

Letter 1601.—Collated with original in possession of Earl Waldegrave.

To-morrow the merchants carry their petition; which, I suppose, will be coolly received, since, if I hear true, the system is to cut off all traffic with America at present—as, you know, we can revive it when we please. There! there is food for meditation! Your reflections, as you understand the subject better than I do, will go further than mine could. Will the French you converse with be civil and keep their countenances?

George Damer t'other day proclaimed your departure for the 25th; but the Duchess of Richmond received a whole cargo of letters from ye all on Friday night, which talk of a fortnight or three weeks longer. Pray remember it is not decent to be dancing at Paris, when there is a civil war in your own country. You would be like the country squire, who passed by with his hounds as the battle of Edgehill began.

24.

I am very sorry to tell you the Duke of Gloucester is dying. About three weeks ago the physicians said it was absolutely necessary for him to go abroad immediately. He dallied, but was actually preparing. He now cannot go, and probably will not live many days, as he has had two shivering fits, and the physicians give the Duchess no hopes[1]. Her affliction and courage are not to be described; they take their turns as she is in the room with him or not. His are still greater. His heart is broken, and yet his firmness and coolness amazing. I pity her beyond measure; and it is not a time to blame her having accepted an honour which so few women could have resisted, and scarce one ever has resisted.

The London and Bristol merchants carried their petitions yesterday to the House of Commons. The opposition contended for their being heard by *the* committee of the

[1] The Duke lived till 1805.

whole House, who are to consider the American papers; but the court sent them to *a* committee, after a debate till nine at night, with nothing very remarkable, on divisions of 197 to 81, and 1[92][2] to 65. Lord Stanley spoke for the first time; his voice and manner pleased, but his matter was not so successful.

Dowdeswell[3] is dead, and Tom Hervey[4]. The latter sent for his wife and acknowledged her. Don't forget to inform me when my letters must stop. Your brother has made his peace in Cavendish Square[5]. Adieu! Yours ever.

1602. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Jan. 24, 1775.

I return the rebus, which I forgot to commend as it deserves, having seen it before; but I cannot tell my stories now, having much more melancholy employment. The Duke of Gloucester is dying; the physicians have no hopes, nor the poor Duchess! Though I am a bad courtier, I must be a good uncle; and even a good courtier, when I can never be rewarded for it.

The House of Commons sat till past nine last night on petitions; but the newspapers are now tolerable journals. Lord Stanley spoke for the first time and pleased by his manner: his matter, they say, would have pleased as well on any other day.

The Cophthi were an Egyptian race, of whom nobody knows anything but the learned; and thence I gave Mrs. Montagu's academies the name of Coptic, a derivation not worth repeating or explaining. Tom Hervey is dead; after

[2] Piece torn out.

[3] William Dowdeswell, sometime Chancellor of the Exchequer.

[4] Second son of first Earl of Bristol by his second wife. He married Anne, daughter of Francis Coghlan, Councillor-at-Law in Ireland. He had been on bad terms with her, and had tried to set aside his marriage.

[5] Probably with the Princess Amelia, who lived in Cavendish Square.

sending for his wife and reacknowledging her in pathetic heroics.

1603. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, Jan. 25, 1775.

The Duke of Gloucester is very ill. Had I begun my letter last night, I should have said extremely ill. It was reported and believed that he was dead; but he slept eight hours last night, and his pulse was better this morning. The physicians, who gave no hopes yesterday, say to-night that they never saw any mortal symptoms. Be assured they speak as little truth of the past as they know of what is to come. The Duke has been declining this month; and he was ordered to go abroad immediately, but delayed—and now is not able to go. I hope in God he will get strength enough—I wish him abroad for every reason. The other Duke[1], his brother, has erected his standard in opposition, and though the Duke of Gloucester is too wise, I trust, to take such a part, he would be teased to death with the politics of the Luttrels, and had better be out of the way.

The times are indeed very serious. Pacification with America is not the measure adopted. More regiments are ordered thither, and to-morrow a plan, I fear equivalent to a declaration of war, is to be laid before both Houses. They are bold ministers, methinks, who do not hesitate on a civil war, in which victory may bring ruin, and disappointment endanger their heads. Lord Chatham has already spoken out: and though his outset (a motion in the Lords last Friday) was neither wise nor successful, he will certainly be popular again with the clamorous side, which no doubt will become the popular side too, for all wars are costly, and consequently grievous. Acquisition alone can make

Letter 1603.—[1] The Duke of Cumberland.

those burthens palatable; and in a war with our own colonies we must afflict instead of acquiring them, and cannot recover them without having undone them. I am still to learn wisdom and experience, if these things are not so.

I thank you much for the opera of the Conclave. It loses greatly of its spirit by my unacquaintance with the *dramatis personae*. By the duration of the interregnum, I suppose the Holy Ghost is strangely puzzled between the crowns and the Jesuits; and the Cardinals more afraid of poison from the latter, than of the menaces of the former. Though old folks are not less ambitious than young, they have greater aversion to arsenic. But seriously, is it not amazing that the Jesuits can still exist, when their last crime[2] was sufficient to have drawn down vengeance on them, if they had not been proscribed before?

We have no news of ordinary calibre; but perhaps I grow too old to learn the lesser anecdotes of the town. I scarce ever go to public places, and live only with people who have turned the corner of adventures. Indeed in this country there is something so singular and so new in most characters, that all the world hears the history of the most remarkable performers. The winter is young yet. I dare to say it will not long be barren.

27th.

The Duke of Gloucester, I hope, is out of danger; I mean for the present. It is a constitution that will always give alarms; it has radical evils, and yet amazing stamina. As to the physicians, I do not mind a syllable they say. On Saturday they were very proud of a discovery—they had now found out his distemper, and it was a new one; he had two shivering fits, and so there was matter forming. This mighty discovery, which only authenticated their former ignorance, proves to be a new blunder. On Tuesday

[2] Of poisoning Pope Ganganelli. *Walpole.*

they gave the Duchess no hopes at all, and on Wednesday night they recollected that his Royal Highness had had no mortal symptom—for they have no shivering fit of shame. They now talk of his going abroad in April; I wish it much sooner. In short, I am very impatient, both for his health, and other reasons. He will take the Duchess and his daughters, and go no further than the South of France. That is an answer to a question[3] you have not asked. His mind will be more at peace, and he will be free from all who would disturb it for their own ends. The Luttrels are every day, I believe, writing impertinent paragraphs in the newspapers, as if in behalf of the Duke of Gloucester, which only tends to incense the King against him, that they may involve him in their own views; but he knows it, and will not be their dupe. Adieu!

P.S. I forgot to tell you that the town of Birmingham has petitioned the Parliament to enforce the American Acts, that is, make war; for they have a manufacture of swords and muskets. I believe the Dutch will petition too, for much such a reason!

1604. To the Marquise du Deffand.

De Londres, ce 27 Janvier, 1775.

Mon cousin s'attendra à la nouvelle de la Mort de Monseigneur le Duc de Glocestre — mais tout va bien. Le Frisson de Samedi n'annonça que la Fievre, et cette fievre est passèe, et le danger aussi pour le present, à ce que je me flatte. Nos Medecins sont comme les votres, c'est à dire, des Ignorants. Il y a tout lieu de croire que le Voyage

[3] Whether he will go to Italy. *Walpole.*

Letter 1604.—Not in C.; now first printed (*verbatim et literatim*) from original in Walpole's handwriting in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis.

d'outremer aura lieu, mais on le remet au mois d'Avril, ce qui me paroit une ignorance nouvelle. Pourquoi le differer? Je vous avoue je n'en serai pas fachè sur mon propre compte. Notre Cour est bien petite, cependant mon role ne me flatte pas. Je n'y suis pas propre; et bien que l'interet que je prenne à la position effrayante de la Duchesse fait que je neglige rien qui puisse lui marquer mon zele, il est tres penible pour moi d'aller une ou deux fois par jour en cour. Cela ne quadre pas avec mon oisiveté, mes amusemens, mes occupations. Cela me rejette dans le monde, et c'est contraire à tout ce que j'ai toujours aimè, en un mot, à la Libertè. Je fus charmè quand mon Pere quitta le Ministere; moi je quittai le Parlement d'abord que j'en pûs saisir le Moment, et assurement c'est bien contre ma Volontè que je me trouve Courtisan à mon Age. Je n'en ai ni l'ambition, ni l'interet, ni l'envie, ni la jalousie, ni la faussetè; je cederois gaiement ma place à Quiconque en voudroit.

Je viens de recevoir une lettre de M. Conway du 19 par un jeune Seigneur Anglais. Il dit qu'ils seront de retour au tems fixe, mais j'ignore quel est ce tems fixe. Il me parle d'une grande Revolution qui va se faire dans la mode de s'habiller chez vous, et par consequent chez nous. Il dit qu'il s'agit de se mettre comme les Chevaliers du St. Esprit — Oh! pour moi je vous jure que je ne m'y mettrai point — Je ne suis point fait moi pour m'habiller comme un Danseur de Corde. A l'Armenienne[1], a la bonne heure: J'aimerai assez à m'enveloper d'un grand manteau jusqu'aux talons. Je crois qu'on a mal montré St. Cyr à mes parens. Quand j'y fus, on fit repeter des Scenes et des Dialogues de Mad. de Maintenon aux petites Demoiselles, qui les jouerent dans la perfection; et vous scavez qu'on me fit present d'une lettre originale de la Fonda-

[1] Alluding to Rousseau.

trice: J'y fûs cinque heures à ma grande contentement, quoique pas l'extreme felicité que je sentois avec vous à Sceaux[2], ou a la journèe de Livry. Enfin il faut s'enthousiasmer à de certaines visions, comme je fais, san quoi Tout est fade. Aussi ces Songes arrivent ils bien rarement, et ne sont que pour les Elus. Cela m'arriva une fois apres avoir ecrit le Chateau d'Otrante. Deux ou trois ans apres J'allais à l'université de Cambridge, ou j'avois passè trois annèes de ma Jeunesse. En entrant dans un des Colleges que j'avois entierement oubliè, je me trouvois precisement dans la Cour de mon Chateau. Les Tours, les portes, la Chapelle, la grande Salle, tout y repondoit avec la plus grande exactitude. Enfin, l'Idèe de ce College m'etoit restè dans la Tete sans y penser, et je m'en etois servi pour le plan de mon Chateau sans m'en apercevoir; de sorte que je croyois entrer tout de bon dans celuy d'Otrante — si vous aviez etè a cotè de moi, je vous aurez frappè d'extasie, comme dans le carosse quand vous me racontates votre visite à Mad. de Coulanges[3]. Hah! je n'entre pas *au palais roial* avec le meme plaisir!

Couty m'a payè les Emeraudes: sont elles arrivèes en bonne santè?

La Partie Angloise de ma lettre sera bien courte aujourdhui. On a disputè tard hier à la Chambre basse sur les remontrances des Marchands Americains — mais je n'en scais point le detail, si non que Charles Fox s'est fort dechainè contre le Seigneur North, et que le Duc d'Alva[4] s'est distinguè pour la cour. On a voulu aussi rayer Charles premier du Martyrologe: Wilkes a dit qu'il le vouloit bien,

[2] Formerly the residence of the Duchesse du Maine (Anne Louise Bénédicte de Bourbon, wife of the legitimated son of Louis XIV). Sceaux was a focus of political intrigue towards the end of the reign of Louis XIV. Madame du Deffand passed much time at Sceaux in her younger days. The life there is described in the *Mémoires* of Madame de Staal.

[3] Cousin of Madame de Sévigné.

[4] Lord George Germain.

ayant toujours observè le jour de sa mort comme fete, et non pas comme jour maigre: mais la Cour a prevalu dans l'une et l'autre contestation à une grande pluralitè de voix. Ce qui est drole, c'est que la Ville de Birmingham a demandè la guerre, parce qu'on y fabrique des epèes et des fusils. Je finis — il n'y a pas moyen de rencherir sur cet Avis.

1605. To the Marquise du Deffand.

De Londres, ce 31 Janvier, 1775.

Je vous écris aujourdhui, au lieu de Vendredy, pour deux raisons: la premiere, parce que je ne scais si mon cousin ne sera parti avant l'arrivèe de celle cy; l'autre que je veux reprendre les Mardys pour mes jours de poste, parceque vos lettres arrivant ordinairement les Samedys, je n'y peux repondre qu'apres sept jours. A l'heure qu'il est, j'ai recû Deux, l'une Samedy passè, l'autre hier au soir; celle cy ecrite conformement à votre bontè ordinaire, et à vos attentions incroyables, pour me parler de Mad. d'Olonne, dont je commence à rougir, à cause de la peine que je vous ai donnèe, et de ce que j'ai mis trop d'empressement pour une bagatelle. Si le mal n'est fait, n'en parlez pas à la Grand-maman. La politesse de votre Ami M. de Presle suffira, et je vous prie de l'en remercier extremement; aussi cet empressement fera apparemment que Mad. Mariette y mettra un prix ridicule se voyant tant pressèe — mais au vrai j'ai honte de vous en tant parler.

L'Abbè Bartelemi sera surement obei; c'est le moins que je peux faire pour vos Amis, apres tout ce que vous faites pour les miens. Ne doutez pas de leur reconnoissance. C'est la Verité meme que M. Conway, et il me parle constamment de vous en termes dont je ne puis nullement douter. Il conservera cette reconnoissance, il n'est ni

Letter 1605.—Not in C.; now first printed (*verbatim et literatim*) from original in Walpole's handwriting in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis.

jeune ni changeant. Il est distrait, il est froid, il n'aura pas toute la chaleur que vous aimez dans vos Amis, mais il ne vous oubliera jamais. Il ne vous grondera pas, en vous aimant toujours egalement. Ma Médaille est à Strawberry Hill, ou je n'ai etè depuis deux mois, à cause de ma goutte, des visites, et de la Maladie de Monseigneur le Duc; mais je compte d'y aller Dimanche prochain, et je rapporterai la medaille pour la faire dessiner. Pour les visites, j'en avois bien a faire — pour la Politique, je ne m'en soucie pas, je ne m'en mesle point. Je n'ai aucune liaison avec nos factions; j'ai des Amis de l'un et de l'autre cotè, j'entends parler des deux Chambres, et j'en mande les nouvelles à mon cousin; mais je ne scais rien que l'evenement passè. M. Selwyn vint chez moi l'autre jour, et nous nous plaignimes de n'entendre parler que de l'Amérique. 'Hah! pour moi, dit il, il faut que je prenne un maitre Americain pour me mettre au ton du monde.'

Son Altesse Roiale est sortie hier pour prendre l'air. Je ne crois pas ses poumons attaquès; mais il tousse beaucoup, et je presse son depart.

Je suis tres content de l'etrenne de M. Conway; le mot est tres joli, et ce qui est bien plus rare, exactement vrai. Pourquoi ne pas m'envoyer ses couplets? avez vous eû peur de m'humilier, de ce qu'ils valent beaucoup plus que les miens? Hah! je ne suis point envieux, ni jaloux de ma poesie; et encore plus eloignè d'etre fachè si l'on me prefere mes Amis. Je vous l'ai avouè, j'ai infiniment d'orgeuil, mais point de Vanitè. Jamais Auteur nè s'est moins enthousiasmè pour ses ouvrages.

Je n'ai rien à mander aujourdhui à mes parens, si vous les avez encore. Actuellement je ne suis occupè que d'une Tragedie nouvelle qu'on va donner, et à laquelle je m'interesse beaucoup. Le Sujet est tirè de la Revolution de Portugal en faveur des Bragances. Elle est tres superieure-

ment ecrite : Le Language admirablement beau, la poesie charmante — cependant, j'ai peur : L'evenement est connu, et heureux, par consequent, moins interessant. De plus, l'Auteur[1] me paroit peu fait au ressorts du Theatre, et s'entend plus aux images de la poesie qu'aux characteres ; ce qui fait qu'il y a des longueurs, et que l'Interet n'est pas soutenu. C'est un Irlandois que j'ai autrefois connu, et qui a beaucoup d'esprit, et ce qui est plus surprenant, il est naturellement comique, et contrefait dans la perfection. On m'a persuadè de lui faire une Epilogue, dont je ne suis nullement content. Vous scavez que c'est notre usage immanquable de commencer et finir une piece par des prologues et des Epilogues. Ordinairement ces derniers morceaux sont non seulement gais, mais gaillards — usage ridicule, de faire rire ceux qu'on vient d'attrister, et que je n'ai voulu pratiquer, de sorte que mes vers ne sont que maussades ; mais comme la Satire, faute d'obscenitè, nous rejouit, je me suis un peu mocquè de my Lord Chesterfield, en prenant la defense du beau Sexe ; ce qui fera pardonner à la platitude de ma poesie. La piece ne sera donnèe que Samedi en huit. Vous en scaurez la Reussite.

P.S. N'oubliez pas de m'avertir si je me dois habiller en danseur de corde l'annèe qui vient : Mr. Conway m'a annoncè qu'il s'agite chez vous de reprendre l'habillement des Chevaliers du St. Esprit : vos modes decident les notres.

1606. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Feb. 1, 1775.

We are out of pain at present, Madam, about our Royal Highness. He has been out to take the air ; and if I had any influence, should try that in France immediately ; but

[1] Robert Jephson.

he says he should only pass the remaining part of the winter in bad inns, and thinks of not setting out till April.

I know nothing of news: Lord Chatham is at this moment preparing some in the House of Lords, which will furnish the end of the letter. Last night I was at a ball at the Lady's Club. It was all goddesses, instead of being a resurrection of dancing matrons as usual. The Duchess of Devonshire[1] effaces all without being a beauty; but her youth, figure, flowing good-nature, sense, and lively modesty, and modest familiarity, make her a phenomenon. Don't wonder I was at a ball; I have discovered that I am a year younger than I thought, yet I shall not use this year yet, but come out with it a dozen years hence.

Mr. Jephson's tragedy, which I concluded would not answer all that I had heard of it, exceeded my expectations infinitely. The language is noble,—the poetry, similes, and metaphors, enchanting. The harmony, the modulation of the lines, shows he has the best ear in the world. I remember nothing at all equal to it appearing in my time, though I am Methusalem in my memory of the stage. I don't know whether it will have all the effect there it deserves, as the story is so well known, and the happy event of it known too, which prevents *attendrissement*. Besides, the subject in reality demands but two acts, for the conspiracy and the revolution; but one can never be tired of the poetry that protracts it. Would you believe I am to appear on the theatre along with it? My Irish friends, the Binghams, have overpersuaded me to write an epilogue, which was wanting. They gave me the subject, which I have executed miserably; but at least I do not make the new Queen of Portugal lay aside her majesty, and sell *double entendres* like Lady Bridget Tollemache.

LETTER 1606.—[1] Georgiana Spencer, Duchess of Devonshire.

I was still more surprised to find my name in print the other day: Mr. Barry, the mad Irish painter, has written a book, and not a mad or insensible one. After talking of the great masters, he says, 'As to the Dutch school, I leave it to the deep researches of the Hon. H. W. (at length) or any other such learned gentleman, if such another can be found.' Methinks this is a little hard, Madam, seeing I have been always blamed for undervaluing the Dutch masters; but I suppose Mr. Barry has seen me laugh at some of his extravagancies in the expositions, without my knowing him. However, I shall say nothing of that, or anything more to hurt him, if ever I defend myself from Dutchism, as perhaps I may. This, I remember, was one of the stories I promised you—I forget the rest; but your Ladyship will remind me when we meet over a syllabub under the cow.

2nd.

Yesterday's mountain miscarried with more *éclat* than last time. Lord Chatham offered a bill for pacifying America by abrogating the Declaratory Law[2] and the late Acts; and, they say, recalled the memory of his ancient lustre. Lord Gower reminding him of something he had said in the other House the Lord knows when, received a thundering denial, as the gods call it; but men, a flat lie. Lord Temple lamented the production of so mischievous a bill, which yet he would vote to admit out of respect; but what signifies repeating the faint efforts of an old watergall opposed to its own old sun! The Duke of Grafton complained of a bill so hurried in. Lord Chatham replied, His Grace was at least as unfairly eager to hurry it out. That Duke acquainted the assembly that he differs with everybody, and has a plan of his own to offer. Lord

[2] The Declaratory Act of 1766 proclaimed the absolute rights of England over the American colonies, including the right to tax.

Shelburne was violent, and Lord Mansfield so violently frightened, that he was not there; on which I hear King George joked before all his servants, when he was told it after the play. The newspapers, which now are very accurate in recounting debates, will tell your Ladyship the rest very faithfully to-morrow. When the last Prime Minister designs to open his plan I do not know; the present produces his to-day. There is a great deal of bravery and a great deal of terror stirring; and the address of to-day, I am told, has a layer of each. You must prepare, Madam, to talk America; there is no other topic to be heard, and in truth it grows a very grave one. You must lay aside your botany from the hyssop to the cedar of Libanus, and study imports and exports, and charters and geography, and religion and government, and such light reading: you will have occasion for it all. In a little time the whole country will be so much in earnest, that the dispute will probably lie in a less compass; people discuss at first, but are only angry and personal at last: and to be sure that is more amusing.

I hope this is the last letter I shall send you before you land at Hyde Park turnpike. You will have a very good neighbourhood there; Lord and Lady Apsley[3] are mighty agreeable people.

1607. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, Feb. 15, 1775.

You have been made easy long ago, I hope, about my gout, and have restored your good opinion to the bootikins, which reduced it to so short a fit. *They could* not give you

[3] Tryphena, daughter of Thomas Scawen; m. (1759), as his second wife, Hon. Henry Bathurst (afterwards second Earl Bathurst), created Baron Apsley in 1771.

an inflammation and swelling; they probably prevented its being worse. It is still more idle when people say they weaken—who was ever *not* weak after the gout? I, who am *naturally* weaker than anybody, recover my feet so much that I can stamp on marble with all my force, which I never saw a gouty person besides able to do. Be assured that the physicians have set about that nonsensical notion of weakening, only because the bootikins do the contrary. I complained of weakness on my breast, of which I complained thirty years before I ever felt the gout, and the apothecary shook his head, like a knave as he was, and said he had feared they would have that effect. He had never thought so, and if he had, ought to have warned me; but I believe no limb of the faculty ever laid in ambush to intercept and cut off an illness to come. If you still feel weakness, you must not wonder; the bootikins cannot make us young again. I totter as I go downstairs—but I trust I shall never totter so much as to believe in any faculty. Fools and knaves hoodwink common sense, and if it was not like insects, of which no species can be exterminated, it would not exist upon earth.

The war with our colonies, which is now declared, is a proof how much influence jargon has on human actions. A war on our own trade is *popular*! Both Houses are as eager for it as they were for conquering the Indies—which acquits them a little of rapine, when they are as glad of what will impoverish them as of what they fancied was to enrich them—so like are the great vulgar, and the small. Are not you foreigners amazed? We are raising soldiers and seamen—so are the Americans; and, unluckily, can find a troop as easily as we a trooper. But we are above descending to calculation: one would think the whole legislature were of the club at Almack's, and imagined, like Charles Fox, that our fame was to rise in proportion

to our losses. It is more extraordinary that Charles does not adopt their system, as they have copied his, but opposes them, and proposes to make his fortune when they are bankrupt. In the meantime bad news pours in from America. I do not believe all I hear—but fear I shall believe a great deal in spite of my teeth.

Another of your diplomatic brethren is become your brother in the Bath—Gordon, of Brussels. He is a fool for a comedy. We have no other news, nor think of anything that is not beyond the Atlantic. You are strangely old-fashioned to trouble your head about the Conclave; we care as much about the Caliphs of Bagdad.

I misinformed you when I said that the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester had no thoughts of Italy; they propose passing next winter at Rome, but will not stop anywhere else. I say, this is their scheme, and wish it may be executed;—but am far from having any sanguine hopes about his Royal Highness. He does not mend; his cough is very bad, and I think he falls away. He will not leave England till April, because he will inoculate his children before he carries them abroad. I tremble at the delay, and have said all I dare to the Duchess against it, as I am impatient to have him set out, and think no time should be lost.

As I was writing this I received a most obliging letter from Sir Horace the second at Nice, on the suit he is carrying on with my nephew for his most just debt, and professing all management for me. I have answered it, and insisted that he should have none for me. It would be strange indeed if I stood in the way of Gal's son and your nephew—and where justice too is at stake! Indeed, it was by my advice, when I thought Lord Orford past being hurt by it. At present, all I can do is not to let any consideration of me interfere—and I charge you, when you

see him, to convince him that the greatest mark of friendship he can show me is to do himself right—and that speedily, or nothing will be left. Surely he is better intituled to his own than the harpies that prey upon a poor half-witted man! I am now going to write a letter to his mother to ask a trifling favour, which I care not whether she grants or refuses—but it was at the request of another. Here is the letter, I beg you to give or send it, accordingly as she is at Florence or Naples.

1608. To the Rev. William Mason.

Arlington Street, Feb. 18, 1775.

Braganza was acted last night with prodigious success. The audience, the most impartial I ever saw, sat mute for two acts, and seemed determined to judge for themselves, and not be the dupes of the encomiums that had been so lavishly trumpeted. At the third act, they grew pleased, and interested: at the fourth they were cooled and deadened by two unnecessary scenes, but at the catastrophe in the fifth, they were transported. They clapped, shouted, huzzaed, cried bravo, and thundered out applause both at the end, and when given out again; yet the action was not worthy of the poet. Mrs. Yates shone in the dignified scenes, but had not variety enough; Smith, recalling Garrick in *Richard III*, played the Viceroy with great spirit; but Reddish[1] was pitiful and whining in the Duke; Aikin[2] ridiculous in the first old conspirator, and the Friar totally insignificant, though engaged in the principal scene in the play, where indeed he has too little to say. The charming beauties of the poetry were not yet discovered, and the faults in the conduct may

Letter 1608.—[1] Samuel Reddish (1735–1785).
[2] James Aikin or Aickin (d. 1803).

be easily mended. In short, I trust, if this tragedy does not inspire better writers, that it will at least preserve the town from hearing with patience the stuff we have had for these fifty years. There was an excellent prologue written by Murphy. For my poor epilogue, though well delivered by Mrs. Yates, it appeared to me the flattest thing I ever heard, and the audience were very good in not groaning at it. I wish it could be spoken no more. The boxes are all taken for five-and-twenty nights, which are more than it can be acted this season.

I went to the rehearsal with all the eagerness of eighteen, and was delighted to feel myself so young again. The actors diverted me with their dissatisfactions and complaints, and though I said all I could, committed some of what they call proprieties, that were very improper, as seating the Duke and Duchess on a high throne, in the second act, which made the spectators conclude that the revolution, as I knew they would, had happened. The scenes and dresses were well imagined, and the stage handsomely crowded. All this was wanted, for, from the defect in the subject, which calls for but two acts, several scenes languished. A little more knowledge of the stage in the author may prevent this in his future plays. For his poetry, it is beautiful to the highest degree. He has another fault, which is a want of quick dialogue; there is scarce ever a short speech, so that it will please more on reading, than in representation. I will send it to you the moment it is published.

There is nothing else new, nor do I hear of anything coming. The war with America goes on briskly, that is as far as voting goes. A great majority in both Houses is as brave as a mob ducking a pickpocket. They flatter themselves they shall terrify the colonies into submission in three months, and are amazed to hear that there is no

such probability. They might as well have excommunicated them, and left it to the devil to put the sentence into execution.

Good night, and write to me. You are an idle creature, and I am very jealous of your harpsico-violin—it is your interleaved Linnæus[3].

1609. To the Rev. William Mason.

Arlington Street, Feb. 28, 1775.

Thou recreant clerk; I do not mean for not replying to my last missive, but for changing thy mind, thou unhallowed relapse, which I did not know when I wrote to thee last, or I would not have cockered thee up with a promise of *Braganza*; yet to show thee that I keep faith even with heretics, thou shalt have it when thou sayest how it may be sent. Thy sin is too foul to name, but thy conscience tells thee what I mean. 'Tis an Omission worse than any of the tribe of *Com*; and though posterity will be so selfish as to forgive it, there is not a Christian in being that ever can; oh yes, there are some that could, though I trust they cannot. I suppose you will be glad to hear that I have got a codicil to my last gout? I had an inflammation in my face, and yesterday was blooded for it. It sunk in two hours, but baited and gave me a sore throat; this morning I walked lame, and cannot walk without a stick; so the whole is gouty, for that devil can act any distemper, like a fine lady. It has hindered my going to Strawberry, whither the fine weather invited me. I wish we ever had such in summer.

The gates of Janus's temple are open and shut every

[3] 'Mr. Gray often vexed me by finding him heaping notes on an interleaved Linnæus, instead of pranking on his lyre.' See letter to Lady Ossory, Sept. 8, 1791.

other day; the porter has a sad time of it, and deserves a reversion for three lives. We are sending the Americans a sprig of olive[1], lapped up in an Act for a famine[2] next year; for we are as merciful as we are stout. However, as the two Houses do not much reckon upon bonfires to come, each is treating itself with one at present, and have ordered a weekly paper and a pamphlet, each called *The Crisis*, to be burnt by the common hangman; and as contradictions now go hand in hand, each party has its victim. I have seen neither of the sacrifices—both they say are very stupid; the first is too free with his Majesty; the second compliments him with the sole right of taxation. Methinks all Parliaments have a mortal aversion to the word *crisis*.

Since you left town I have made another considerable purchase, for which I have been long haggling, the rest of the Digby miniatures. They had been divided into two shares. There is one superb piece of Sir Kenelm, his wife, and two sons, by Peter Oliver, after Vandyck, in the highest preservation, and certainly the capital miniature of the world. I am not quite sure whether you did not see them two years ago; but why do I tell you anything? you are twiddling your instrument of the composite order, and care no more than Orpheus whether anybody but beasts listens to you. You now owe me two letters, and paid I will be, or I am

Your most obedient
Humble servant.

LETTER 1609.—[1] On Feb. 20 Lord North introduced a conciliatory motion to allow the colonies to tax themselves.

[2] An Act restraining the commerce of the New England colonies with Great Britain, Ireland, and the West Indies, and prohibiting them for a limited time from fishing on the banks of Newfoundland, with certain exceptions in favour of individuals.

1610. To the Rev. William Mason.

March 7, 1775.

If your contempt for your contemporaries extended to total silence, perhaps I should not disagree with you. There is dignity in indignation that refuses wholesome food to a stupid age, that is content with carrion. But why then publish Gray's Life? Keep it back till you like to publish it with the original notes. Leave the Johnsons and Macphersons to worry one another for the diversion of a rabble, that desires and deserves no better sport.

Here is *Braganza*: I do not say that either the subject or conduct are interesting. The language is good, the poetry charming. Read any tragedy written within these thirty years, and then wonder that I was delighted to see even a cousin of Melpomene.

If you have *translated Pygmalion*[1] I shall be very glad to see him too. If you have only translated the music, I shall not be much the wiser, yet do not think my ignorance makes me supercilious. I admire all your talents, though not a judge of all. Your writings, your composite instruments, your drawings are dear to me according to my degrees of capacity; and when I seize every opportunity of drawing you into a correspondence, does not it say that I love your letters, and do my utmost to cultivate your friendship? Yes, I do; let all the Prime Ministers since my father, whom you name, say as much if they can! To my great sorrow we live at a distance, and when I wish to see you most, I have seen you least; yet Strawberry, where you scarce ever was in summer, is pleasant then. If you would at any time give me a week, I should think it no trouble to

Letter 1610.—[1] An opera by Rousseau, translated by Mason at Lord Nuneham's request.

fetch you. Time grows precious to me, and, therefore, I would employ it in the way most agreeable to me. Don't think me importunate, but it shall not be my own fault if I do not please myself.

Yours most sincerely,
H. W.

1611. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, March 20, 1775.

I have not written to you this month, I know: no symptom of negligence, but from want of matter. You will say, perhaps, 'but there have been many long days in Parliament': very true; but long days make small sensation, when the majorities are very great, and always on the same side. The Houses go on fulminating against America; we shall see whether their edicts are regarded, or rather their troops and generals. The province of New York seems to be better disposed than the other colonies; but we must wait for the re-echo of our new Acts, and for the Congress in May. In three months we shall hear whether it will be war or peace. The nation will stare a little if it is the former. It is little expected, and less thought of. We are given up to profusion, extravagance, and pleasure: heroism is not at all in fashion. Cincinnatus will be found at the hazard-table, and Camillus at a ball. The vivacity of the young Queen of France has reached hither. Our young ladies are covered with more plumes than any nation that has no other covering. The first people of fashion are going to act plays, in which comedians, singers, dancers, figurantes, might all walk at a coronation. The summer is to open with a masquerade on the Thames. I am glad the American enthusiasts are so far off; I don't think we should be a match for them. We want more Indies; we cannot afford to lose any.

So you have chosen a Pope[1]! Which will he fear most, France and Spain, or poison?

The Duke of Gloucester has lost his second daughter[2]; both were inoculated, that he might carry them abroad. The youngest was very unhealthy, and died the next day after the disorder appeared; the other[3], on whom he dotes, will do well. He is far from being so himself; coughs, and falls away. I hope a better climate will save him.

I am wishing for summer; not to go on the water in mask, but to escape from this scene of diversions. I mix in them as little as I can; they suit neither my age or inclination. For some years I have loved the month of June, when I and all the town, for we all live together, I think, are to part.

I just now hear that Lord Bristol[4] is dead at the Bath. He was born to the gout from his mother's family, but starved himself to keep it off. This brought on paralytic strokes, which have dispatched him. Will her Grace of Kingston now pass eldest, and condescend to be, as she really is, Countess of Bristol? or will she come over and take her trial for the becoming dignity of the exhibition in Westminster Hall? How it would sound, 'Elizabeth, Countess of Bristol, *alias* Duchess of Kingston, come into court!' I can tell you nothing more extraordinary, nor would any history figure near hers. It shows genius to strike out anything so new as her achievements. Though we have many uncommon personages, it is not easy for them to be superiorly particular. Adieu!

LETTER 1611.—[1] Giovanni Angelo Braschi, Pope under the name of Pius VI.

[2] Princess Caroline Augusta Maria.

[3] Princess Sophia Matilda.

[4] George William Hervey, second Earl of Bristol. *Walpole.*

1612. To the Rev. William Mason.

Arlington Street, April 3, 1775.

Well! your book[1] is walking the town in midday. How it is liked I do not yet know. Were I to judge from my own feelings, I should say there never was so entertaining or interesting a work: that it is the most perfect model of biography; and must make Tacitus, and Agricola too, detest you. But as the world and simple I are not often of the same opinion, it will perhaps be thought very dull. If it is, all we can do is to appeal to that undutiful urchin, Posterity, who commonly treats the judgement of its parents with contempt, though it has so profound a veneration for its most distant ancestors. As you have neither imitated the teeth-breaking diction of Johnson, nor coined slanders against the most virtuous names in story, like modern historians, you cannot expect to please the *reigning* taste. Few persons have had time, from their politics, diversions, and gaming, to have read much of so large a volume, which they will keep for the summer, when they have full as much of nothing to do. Such as love poetry, or think themselves poets, will have hurried to the verses and been disappointed at not finding half a dozen more Elegies in a Churchyard. A few fine gentlemen will have read one or two of the shortest letters, which not being exactly such as they write themselves, they will dislike or copy next post; they who wish or intend to find fault with Gray, you, or even me, have, to be sure, skimmed over the whole, except the Latin, for even spite, *non est tanti*——. The reviewers, no doubt, are already writing against you; not because they have read the whole, but because one's own name is always the first thing that strikes one in a book. The

Letter 1612.—[1] *The Life of Gray.*

Scotch will be more deliberate, but not less angry; and if not less angry, not more merciful. Every Hume, however spelt, will I don't know what do; I should be sorry to be able to guess what. I have already been asked why I did not prevent publication of the censure on David[2]? The truth is (as you know) I never saw the whole together till now, and not that part; and if I had, why ought I to have prevented it? Voltaire[3] will cast an *imbelle* javelin *sine ictu* at Gray, for he loves to depreciate a *dead* great author, even when unprovoked,—even when he has commended him alive, or before he was so vain and so envious as he is now. The Rousseaurians will imagine that I interpolated the condemnation of his *Eloïse*[4]. In short, we shall have many sins laid to our charge, of which we are innocent; but what can the malicious say against the innocent but what is not true?

I am here in brunt to the storm; you sit serenely aloof and smile at its sputtering. So should I too, were I out of sight, but I hate to be stared at, and the object of whispers before my face. The Maccaronis will laugh out, for you say I am still in the fashionable world.—'What!' they will cry, as they read while their hair is curling,—'that old soul'; for old and old-fashioned are synonymous in the vocabulary of mode, alas! Nobody is so sorry as I to be in the world's fashionable purlieus; still, in truth, all this is a joke and touches me little. I seem to myself a Strulbrug, who have lived past my time, and see almost my own life written before my face while I am yet upon earth, and as it were the only one of my contemporaries with whom I began the world. Well; in a month's time there will be little question of Gray, and less of me.

[2] See Gray's letter to James Beattie of July 2, 1770.

[3] See *Works of Gray*, ed. Gosse, vol. iii. p. 378, note.

[4] See Gray's letter to Mason of Jan. 22, 1761.

America and feathers and masquerades will drive us into libraries, and there I am well content to live as an humble companion to Gray and you; and, thank my stars, not on the same shelf with the Macphersons and Dalrymples.

One omission I have found, at which I wonder; you do not mention Gray's study of physic, of which he had read much, and I doubt to his hurt. I had not seen till now that delightful encomium on Cambridge[5], when empty of its inhabitants. It is as good as anything in the book, and has that true humour, which I think equal to any of his excellencies. So has the apostrophe to Nicholls[6], 'Why, you monster, I shall never be dirty and amused as long as I live,' but I will not quote any more, though I shall be reading it and reading it for the rest of my life.

But come, here is a task you must perform, and forthwith, and if you will not write to me, you shall *transcribble* to me, or I will *combustle* you. Send me incontinently all the proper names that are omitted. You know how I love writing marginal notes in my books, and there is not a word in or out of the book of which I will be ignorant. To save you trouble, here is a list of who is's. Page 152, fill up the asterisks; do. p. 174, do. 206, do. 232, 249, Peer who is it; 250? do.; the Lady of Quality? 251; the leader, 275; who the asterisk, 282? the Dr. who, 283? do. 284; the B.'s and E.'s 288, where, whose is Stratton? 290, Lord?

You see my queries are not very numerous. If you do not answer them I will not tell you a syllable of what the *fashionable* say of your book, and I do not believe you have another correspondent amongst them. At present they are labouring through a very short work, more peculiarly addressed to them, at least to a respectable part of them,

[5] In Gray's letter to West written in Dec. 1736.

[6] Rev. Norton Nicholls; see Gray's letter to him of June 24, 1769.

the Jockey Club, who, to the latter's extreme surprise, have been consulted on a point of honour by Mr. Fitzgerald, which, however, he has already decided himself with as little conscience as they could do in their most punctilious moments.

If you will satisfy me, I will tell you the following *bon mot* of Foote, but be sure you don't read what follows till you have obeyed my commands. Foote was at Paris in October, when *Dr. Murray*[7] was, who *admiring* or *dreading* his wit (for commentators dispute on the true reading) often invited him to dinner with his nephew[8]. The Ambassador produced a very small bottle of Tokay, and dispensed it in very small glasses. The uncle, to prove how precious every drop, said it was of the most exquisite growth, and very old. Foote, taking up the diminutive glass, and examining it, replied, 'It is very little of its age.' Return me my story if you don't perform the conditions. I wish I could send you anybody's else life to write!

1613. To the Rev. William Cole.

Arlington Street, April 11, 1775.

I THANK you, dear Sir, for your kind letter and the good account you give of yourself—nor can I blame your change from writing—that is, transcribing to reading—sure you ought to divert yourself rather than others—though I should not say so, if your pen had not confined itself to transcripts.

I am perfectly well, and heed not the weather; though I wish the seasons came a little oftener into their own places instead of each other's. From November till a fort-

[7] The pseudonym adopted by Lord Mansfield during his visit to France in the preceding autumn.

[8] Lord Stormont, Ambassador at Paris.

night ago, we had warmth that I should often be glad of in summer—and since we are not sure of it then, was rejoiced when I could get it. For myself, I am a kind of delicate Hercules: and though made of paper, have, by temperance, by using as much cold water inwardly and outwardly as I can, and by taking no precautions against catching cold, and braving all weathers, become capable of suffering by none. My biennial visitant, the gout, has yielded to the bootikins, and stayed with me this last time but five weeks in lieu of five months. Stronger men perhaps would kill themselves by my practice, but it has done so long with me, I shall trust to it.

I intended writing to you on Gray's Life, if you had not prevented me. I am charmed with it, and prefer it to all the biography I ever saw. The style is excellent, simple, unaffected: the method admirable, artful, and judicious. He has *framed* the fragments (as a person said) so well, that they are fine drawings, if not finished pictures. For my part, I am so interested in it, that I shall certainly read it over and over. I do not find that is likely to be the case with many *yet*. Never was a book, which people pretended to expect so much with impatience, less devoured—at least in London, where quartos are not of quick digestion. Faults are found, I hear, at Eton with the Latin poems for false quantities—no matter—they are equal to the English—and can one say more?

At Cambridge, I should think, the book would both offend much, and please—at least if they are as sensible to humour as to ill-humour. And there is orthodoxy enough to wash down a camel. The Scotch and the reviewers will be still more angry, and the latter have not a syllable to pacify them—so they who wait for their decisions will probably miss of reading the most entertaining book in the world—a punishment which they who trust to such wretched

judges deserve, for who are more contemptible than such judges, but they who pin their faith on them?

In answer to you, yourself, my good Sir, I shall not subscribe to your censure of Mr. Mason, whom I love and admire, and who has shown the greatest taste possible in the execution of this work. Surely he has *said* enough in gratitude, and *done* far beyond what gratitude could demand. It seems delicacy in expatiating on the legacy: particularizing more gratitude would have lessened the evidence of friendship, and made the justice done to Gray's character look more like a debt. He speaks of him in slender circumstances, not as distressed—and so he was, till after the deaths of his parents and aunts, and even then, surely not rich. I think he does somewhere say that he meant to be buried with his mother, and not specifying any other place confirms it. In short, Mr. Mason shall never know your criticisms; he has a good heart, and would feel them, though certainly not apprised that he could merit them. A man who has so called out all his friend's virtues could not want them himself.

I shall be much obliged to you for the prints you destine for me. The Earl of Cumberland I have, and will not rob you of. I wish you had been as successful with Mr. G. as with Mr. T.[1] I mean, if you are not yet paid—now is the time, for he has sold his house to the Duke of Marlborough—I suppose he will not keep his prints long: he changes his pursuits continually and extravagantly—and then sells to indulge new fancies.

I have had a piece of luck within these two days. I have long lamented our having no certain piece written by Anne Boleyn's brother, Lord Rochford. I have found a very pretty copy of verses by him in the new published second

LETTER 1613.—[1] Perhaps Mr. Gulston and Mr. Tyson.

Rev. William Mason

from a painting by Sir J. Reynolds. P.R.A.

volume of the *Nugae Antiquae*[2], though by mistake he is called Earl of, instead of Viscount, Rochford. They are taken from a MS. dated twenty-eight years after the author's death, and are much in the manner of Lord Surry's and Sir Tho. Wyat's poems. I should at first have doubted if they were not counterfeited, on reading my *Noble Authors*; but then the blunder of *Earl* for *Viscount* would hardly have been committed. A little modernized, and softened in the cadence, they would be very pretty.

I have got the rest of the Digby pictures, but at a very high rate. There is one very large of Sir Kenelm, his wife, and two sons, in exquisite preservation, though the heads of him and his wife not so highly finished as those I have—yet the boys and draperies are so amazing, that, together with the size, it is certainly the most capital miniature in the world.—There are a few more, very fine too. I shall be happy to show them to you, whenever you Burnhamize—I mean before August, when I propose making my dear old blind friend a visit at Paris—nothing else would carry me thither. I am too old to seek diversions, and too indolent to remove to a distance by choice, though not so immovable as you to much less distance. Adieu! pray tell me what you hear is said of Gray's Life at Cambridge.

Yours ever,

H. W.

1614. To the Rev. William Mason.

Arlington Street, April 14, 1775.

What is the perfection of ingratitude? silence. What is the perfection of gratitude? silence. Obedience is better than sacrifice, but obedience may be sacrifice too: judge.

[2] Compiled from family papers relating to the Haringtons by Rev. Henry Harington (1755–1791).

We are both a little disappointed, are not we? How could we imagine that a quarto, that contained nothing but wit, humour, sentiment, truth, morality, reflection, genuine and original poetry, and the memoirs of two poets, of which one was a youth without guile or gall, and the other a good man through life, should interest the present age; especially when such ingredients were arranged with exquisite taste and judgement, and compose the most pleasing work, the standard of biography? No, my good friend, unless folks spare their praises because it would charm me to hear them, I have been forced to ask what is thought of Gray's Life. Indeed nobody, without my avidity, could read it at once, and as it has been published a fortnight, it was impossible it could keep its station amidst the torrent of unlively follies that overflow each day. Well, the best books were certainly never calculated for the plurality of readers; or, which is wondrous rare, some very good judge must be the dictator of the age. Still it is a comfort that works of genius are indestructible. They can neither be overlaid by the dullness of cotemporaries, nor escape the penetration of subsequent taste in all centuries, who, like the adepts in chemistry, transmit the secret to the brotherhood, and preserve the nostrum of the elixir for those who are worthy of it.

For me, though I recur once or twice a day to *the volume*, I have had time to read other things too, as a journey to Spain and Portugal, by a Mr. Twiss[1], who tells one nothing in vulgar aims at wit but what Baretti and others have told, that those kingdoms contain nothing but muleteers and bad inns, and are as dull and depopulated as countries must be, where the Inquisition has reigned so long, and despotism reigns still. I have waded through Mr. Tyrr-

Letter 1614.—[1] Richard Twiss (1747–1821).

whit's[2] most tedious notes to the *Canterbury Tales*, for a true antiquary can still be zealous to settle the genuine shape of a lump of mineral from which Dryden extracted all the gold, and converted into beautiful medals. I was paid for my trouble by lighting on this couplet, so applicable to her Grace of Kingston,—

> I graunt it well, I have of non envie,
> Who maidenhed preferre to bigamie.

I have dipped into the second volume of *Nugae Antiquae*, and was lucky there too, finding a madrigal, not at all despicable, by the Viscount Rochford (Anne Boleyn's brother), of whom I had never been able to discover a single distich. For Macpherson, I stopped dead short in the first volume; never was such a heap of insignificant trash and lies. One instance shall suffice: in a letter from a spy to James II there is a blank for a name: a note without the smallest ground to build the conjecture on, says, 'probably the Earl of Devonshire[3],' pretty well! yet not content, the honest gentleman says in the index, 'The Earl of Devonshire is suspected of favouring the excluded family.' Can you suspect such a worthy person of forgery? could he forge *Ossian*?

I forgot, in excuse for the town, to tell you that it is very busy about a history of two Perreau's[4] and a Mrs. Rudd, who are likely to be hanged for misapplying their ingenuity. They drew bills, instead of rising from the pillory to pensions by coining anecdotes against the author and friends of the Revolution. As Mrs. Rudd has turned evidence, I suppose as soon as her husband is executed,

[2] Thomas Tyrwhitt (1730–1786), who first exposed the 'Rowley' forgeries in print.

[3] William Cavendish (1641–1707), fourth Earl and first Duke of Devonshire.

[4] Daniel and Robert Perreau were found guilty, and hanged in Jan. 1776; Mrs. Rudd was acquitted.

she will have eight hundred a year to educate her children.

To return to Ossian: is not it evident that the Scots are of Irish parentage? Hurt at the charge of having never produced a *poet*, they forge an epic in *prose*.

Thank you for answering my queries. I have one more: who was the person Gray suspected of writing Colman's and Lloyd's satire[5]? I imagine, the person mentioned in the next page. Mr. Chute says, Posterity will not believe that such a book as yours could be written in this age, which has so totally lost sight of taste and common sense. Pray, did you write it now, or when *somehow or other* (as woman and the French say) you lived in the Augustan age?

Since I wrote this, I have gone further into the *Nugae Antiquae*, and have found three invaluable letters with admirable pictures of the courts of that time. They show clearly what a sad dog Queen Bess was, and K. James what a silly bitch. There is a *bon mot* to the latter of Sir John Harrington's (translator of Ariosto), who had a great deal of wit. The son of David 'did much presse for my opinion touchinge the power of Satane in matter of witchcraft, and askede me with much gravitie if I did truelie understande why the devil did worke more with anciente women than others. I did not refraine from a scurvey jeste, and even saide (notwithstandinge to whom it was saide) that we were taughte hereof in scripture, where it is tolde that the devil walketh in dry places.' Was it possible to make a better answer to such a foolish question? Is not this worthy of being hung up as a companion to Foote's? bad as the ages we wot of, they furnish *bons mots* at least.

Lord Nuneham has just been here, and says everybody

[5] Gray at first suspected Richard Pottinger, Under Secretary of State, 1754–60. See his letter to Mason of June 7, 1760.

he has heard speak of it likes your book; that does not content me; they must say as Mr. Chute and I do, that we will read it for the rest of our lives. Adieu.

Your constant reader,

H. W.

P.S. I forgot to put my letter in the post on Saturday.

1615. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, April 17, 1775.

It is more equitable to suppose that my conception is worn out, than that the world wants events. I tell you of a nation of madmen, and yet want instances. It is certain, both that we do not grow sage, and that I have nothing to say. The town is divided into two great classes, the politicians and the pleasurists. The first are occupied with that vast fœtus, the American contest; and wars at that distance do not go on expeditiously. Wilkes has arrived at his *ne plus ultra*; he has presented a remonstrance[1] in form to the Throne; and, with the magnanimity of an Alexander, used his triumph with moderation—in modern language, with good breeding. The younger generation game, dress, dance, go to Newmarket. Some of them, not juniors all, learn to sing. Cortez was victorious in our last opera, *Montezuma*. I doubt the Americans will not be vanquished in recitative.

The cause of M. de Guisnes[2] is still going on. The

Letter 1615.—[1] On April 10, 1775, Wilkes, as Lord Mayor, presented to the King a remonstrance from the Livery of London against the American Bills. George III owned that he had never seen so well-bred a Lord Mayor.

[2] A lawsuit between the Comte de Guines and his former secretary. The latter, M. Tort, accused the Comte of gambling in the funds. M. de Guines on his side accused Tort of abstracting money and papers, of smuggling, and of communicating dispatches to outsiders. Tort was ordered to apologize and

publications would fill a whole shelf. The Duc d'Aiguillon has, in self-defence, sent forth their correspondence. I have not read it yet; he will find it difficult to appear white in my eyes.

Lady Gertrude Hotham[3] (Lord Chesterfield's sister), one of the few whom perhaps you remember, is dead; she set her ruffle, and thence the rest of her dress, on fire, and died of it in ten days. She had wit like all her brothers, but for many years had been a Methodist. About two years ago, as the Earl was ill, she went with her Primate, Lady Huntingdon[4], to try to tempt him to one of their seminaries in Wales, hoping to get at his soul by a cranny in his health. They extolled the prospects, and then there were such charming mountains! 'Hold, ladies,' said he; 'I don't love mountains,—when your Ladyship's faith has removed the mountains, I will go thither with all my heart!' What pity there is nothing of that wit in his letters!

Is it possible this is all I should have to tell you after a month's silence? 'Tis well I have made it a rule to be punctual; how natural to wait till something should happen, if I were not a prodigy of regularity! I am here alone, courting a coy spring, who sends me a cross answer by an east wind, and am forced to content myself with the old housekeeper, a fire. I have books, and prints, and play-things, and the time passes agreeably, but will not do to relate. Your letters will be particularly acceptable, when you have got your nephew—not that nephews are charming things, but I am sure you will like yours, though you must allow for a vast difference in your ideas. You have been forty years out of England, and can have but a very faint image of what it is now. You have seen nothing but raw

pay a fine, but neither of the parties was satisfied by the verdict, and both appealed.

[3] Widow of Sir Charles Hotham, Baronet, of Scarborough.

[4] Lady Selina Shirley, Countess Dowager of Huntingdon. *Walpole.*

boys and rawer governors. Your nephew has just lived long enough to be formed on the present scale; at Florence one may subsist for a century on the same way of thinking. He has drops of your and his father's blood, that is, gentle, humane feelings. Talk to his heart, not to his language. In short, think that anything you see, and do not approve, is the growth of the age, and not peculiar to him. When you discover his father, be sure it is his own. Believe me, I found him so preferable to his contemporaries, that I loved him.

The Countess has not deigned to send me an answer—perhaps will say she has—or perhaps thinks there is a plot against her, and has written to her lawyers for advice. Take no notice; I was totally indifferent whether she complied with my request or not, but could not refuse to make it. She must have a marvellous quantity of cunning if she suspects me of it, who have done nothing but what my duty compelled me to do against my inclination. Were her son to relapse, she would see whether I was so fond of power! After passing my life in shunning power and self-interest, I am scarce trying to trick an old woman out of a living for a man I never saw!—Do not jog her, I am content with the reasonable excuse she gives me of writing to her no more. Adieu!

Arlington Street, April 22 [5].

This letter would have set out yesterday if I had come to town, as I intended: now it cannot depart till Tuesday; and for anything it contains, will arrive time enough. Yours of the 8th met me here, and seems to complain of my long silence. The beginning of my letter shows I was conscious it was time to write—and yet I am not aware that I have ever exceeded the interval of a month, and

[5] Printed by Cunningham as a separate letter.

am never so long without writing, if anything material happens. This whole winter has been passed in condemning the Americans and preparing punishments for them, and possibly for ourselves too. Nothing looks as if they would submit—but mere reasonings and speculations I never send you. You are mistaken if you think our populace disturb the ministry in their proceedings. The mob have not yet entered into the quarrel. The Americans are far from being popular here. If they are not subdued, or their refractoriness is attended with any national calamity, I should think the consequences would be very serious indeed!—but I never guess or conjecture—especially in so wide a field.

I dined to-day at the Exhibition of Pictures, with the Royal Academicians. We do not beat Titian or Guido yet. Zoffani has sent over a wretched Holy Family. What is he doing? Does he return, or go to Russia, as they say? He is the Hogarth of Dutch painting, but, no more than Hogarth, can shine out of his own way. He might have drawn the Holy Family well if he had seen them *in statu quo*. Sir Joshua Reynolds is a great painter, but, unfortunately, his colours seldom stand longer than crayons. We have a Swede, one Loutherbourg, who would paint landscape and cattle excellently if he did not in every picture indulge some one colour inordinately. Horse, dogs, and animals we paint admirably, and a few landscapes well. The prices of all are outrageous, and the numbers of professors still greater. We have an American, West, who deals in high history, and is vastly admired, but he is heavier than Guercino, and has still less grace, and is very inferior. We have almost a statuary or two, and very good architects; but as Vanbrugh dealt in quarries, and Kent in lumber, Adam, our most admired, is all gingerbread, filigraine, and fan-painting. Wyatt, less fashionable, has as much taste, is grander, and

more pure. We have private houses that cost more than the Palace Pitti [6]. Will you never come and see your fine country before it is undone?

1616. To the Rev. William Cole.

Arlington Street, April 25, 1775.

The least I can do, dear Sir, in gratitude for the cargo of prints I have received to-day from you, is to send you a medicine. A pair of bootikins will set out to-morrow morning in the machine that goes from the Queen's Head in Gray's Inn Lane. To be certain, you had better send for them where the machine inns, lest they should neglect delivering them at Milton. My not losing a moment shows my zeal—but if you can bear a little pain, I should not press you to use them. I have suffered so dreadfully, that I constantly wear them to diminish the stock of gout in my constitution; but as your fit is very slight, and will not last, and as you are pretty sure by its beginning so late that you will never have much; and as the gout certainly carries off other complaints, had not you better endure a little, when it is rather a remedy than a disease? I do not desire to be entirely delivered from the gout, for all reformations do but make room for some new grievance; and, in my opinion, a disorder that requires no physician is preferable to any that does. However, I have put relief in your power, and you will judge for yourself. You must tie them as tight as you can bear, the flannel next to the flesh; and when you take them off, it should be in bed. Rub your feet with a warm cloth, and put on warm stockings, for fear of catching cold while the pores are open. It would kill anybody but me, who am of adamant, to walk out into the dew in winter in my slippers in half an hour after pulling off the bootikins.

[6] Palace of the Great Dukes at Florence. *Walpole.*

A physician sent me word, good-naturedly, that there was danger of catching cold after the bootikins, unless one was careful. I thanked him, but told him my precaution was, never taking any. All the winter I pass five days in a week without walking out, and sit often by the fireside till seven in the evening. When I do go out, whatever the weather is, I go with both glasses of the coach down, and so I do at midnight out of the hottest room. I have not had a single cold, however slight, these two years.

You are too candid in submitting at once to my defence of Mr. Mason. It is true I am more charmed with his book than I almost ever was with one. I find more people like the grave letters than those of humour, and some think the latter a little affected, which is as wrong a judgement as they could make; for Gray never wrote anything easily but things of humour. Humour was his natural and original turn—and though, from his childhood, he was grave and reserved, his genius led him to see things ludicrously and satirically; and though his health and dissatisfaction gave him low spirits, his melancholy turn was much more affected than his pleasantry in writing. You knew him enough to know I am in the right—but the world in general always wants to be told how to think, as well as what to think. The print[1], I agree with you, though like, is a very disagreeable likeness, and the worst likeness of him. It gives the primness he had when under constraint; and there is a blackness in the countenance which was like him only the last time I ever saw him, when I was much struck with it; and, though I did not apprehend him in danger, it left an impression on me that was uneasy, and almost prophetic of what I heard but too soon after leaving him. Wilson drew the picture under much such impression, and

Letter 1616.—[1] The print prefixed to the 4to edition of the *Memoirs of Gray*.

I could not bear it in my room; Mr. Mason altered it a little, but still it is not well, nor gives any idea of the determined virtues of his heart. It just serves to help the reader to an image of the person whose genius and integrity they must admire, if they are so happy as to have a taste for either.

The peep into the gardens at Twickenham is a silly little book, of which a few little copies were printed some years ago for presents, and which now sets up for itself as a vendible book. It is a most inaccurate, superficial, blundering account of Twickenham and other places, drawn up by a Jewess[2], who has married twice, and turned Christian, poetress, and authoress. She has printed her poems, too, and one complimentary copy of mine, which in good breeding I could not help sending her in return for violent compliments in verse to me. I do not remember that hers were good; mine I know were very bad, and certainly never intended for the press.

I bought the first volume of Manchester[3], but could not read it; it was much too learned for me; and seemed rather an account of Babel than Manchester, I mean in point of antiquity. To be sure, it is very kind in an author to promise one the history of a country town, and give one a circumstantial account of the antediluvian world into the bargain. But I am simple and ignorant, and desire no more than I pay for. And then for my progenitors, Noah and the Saxons, I have no curiosity about them. Bishop Lyttelton used to plague me to death with barrows, and tumuli, and Roman camps, and all those bumps in the ground that do not amount to a most imperfect ichnography; but, in good truth, I am content with all arts when perfected, nor inquire

[2] Apparently a Mrs. Penny. (See Nichols's *Illustrations of Literature*, vol. vii. pp. 541–2.)

[3] *The History of Manchester*, by John Whitaker (1735–1808).

how ingeniously people contrived to do without them—and I care still less for remains of art that retain no vestiges of art. Mr. Bryant, who is sublime in unknown knowledge, diverted me more, yet I have not finished his work, no more than he has. There is a great ingenuity in discovering all history (though it has never been written) by etymologies. Nay, he convinced me that the Greeks had totally mistaken all they went to learn in Egypt, &c., by doing, as the French do still, judge wrong by the ear—but as I have been trying now and then for above forty years to learn something, I have not time to unlearn it all again, though I allow this is our best sort of knowledge. If I should die when I am not clear in the History of the World below its first three thousand years, I should be at a sad loss on meeting with Homer and Hesiod, or any of those *moderns* in the Elysian fields, before I knew what I ought to think of them.

Pray do not betray my ignorance: the reviewers and such litterati have called me *a learned and ingenious gentleman.* I am sorry they ever heard my name, but don't let them know how irreverently I speak of the erudite, whom I dare to say they admire. These wasps, I suppose, will be very angry at the just contempt Mr. Gray had for them, and will, as insects do, attempt to sting, in hopes that their twelve-penny readers will suck a little venom from the momentary tumour they raise—but good night—and once more, thank you for the prints.

Yours ever,
H. W.

1617. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, May 7, 1775.

Methinks I am grown an uninteresting correspondent. Yet I know not how to help it. I never could *compose* letters; they were forced to write themselves, and lived

upon their daily bread. I have not only done with politics, but politics have done with themselves. They depend on opposition, as a private dispute does—and there is scarce any such thing—I mean in these islands. There is, indeed, beyond the seas an opposition, so big, that most folks call it a rebellion, which if computed by the tract of country it occupies, we, as so diminutive in comparison, ought rather to be called in rebellion to that. All the late letters thence are as hostile as possible; and, unless their heads are as cool as their hearts seem determined, it will not be long before we hear of the overt acts of war. Our three Generals[1] are sailed, and Gage will have a pretty large army. They say he is preparing to attack the American magazine. Our stake is deep, though, like other rebellions, this does not aim at the capital; yet it is that kind of war in which even victory may ruin us. Some of your *corps diplomatique* menace us with the great armaments preparing in Spain, but the stocks, that are no heroes, do not seem to believe them; and I am too brave to be frightened before they are. I live a good deal here, and the Spaniards must be at Brentford before I shall make the militia of Twickenham turn out. The map of America I have forgotten, and cannot learn it again now, but leave it to a younger generation, whose business it will be.

I have outlived very nearly all the persons that were on the stage when I came into the world. My cotemporaries seem going too. I have lost three of them very lately, Lady Milton[2], General Boscawen[3], and the Duchess of Montagu[4]—I don't believe the latter's death has put the same thoughts into her widower's head as it has into mine: he will think of

LETTER 1617.—[1] Generals Burgoyne, Clinton, and Howe.

[2] Lady Caroline Sackville, daughter of Lionel, Duke of Dorset, and wife of Joseph Damer, Lord Milton. *Walpole.*

[3] Third son of Hugh, first Viscount Falmouth. *Walpole.*

[4] Mary, second daughter of John, second Duke of Montagu. *Walpole.*

leaving a young Duke [5], before he packs up. The Duchess has given 7,000*l.* a year to her daughter the Duchess of Buccleuch, and as much to the Duke of Montagu, yet only for his life, so perhaps she was not very desirous of his having a son and heir. Another of our number is dying, the Duchess of Northumberland. Her turtle will not be so impatient for a mate, as his patent [6] does not enable him to beget Percys—a Master or Miss Smithson would sound like natural children.

The papers, my only informers, say your new Pope has opened the cage of the Jesuits, and let them fly. So has the King of France done for Madame du Barri. I suppose both will return to their former professions,—different kinds of intrigues. His Holiness, I suppose, was afraid of following his predecessor too soon.

Have not you got your nephew yet? Pray, when he leaves you, give him a packet of my letters; it is long since I had one, and I take for granted that he will return by next session.

The present session, say my oracles, is to end this month. So is the cause of Monsieur de Guisnes—it is time; the controversy amounts to many volumes, and exhausted my patience; I could not go through it. His adversary [7], I am

[5] The Duke's only son, Lord Montagu of Boughton, died in 1766. The Duke did not marry again.

[6] George Brudenel, Earl of Cardigan, husband of Lady Mary Montagu, one of the co-heiresses of Duke John; and Sir Hugh Smithson, Earl of Northumberland, husband of Lady Elizabeth Seymour, sole heiress of Algernon, Duke of Somerset, were to be created Dukes at the same time, but as it was from the pretensions of their wives, George III rightly would not entail the Dukedoms on their children by other wives. The Earl of Cardigan would not accept it on that condition; the Earl of Northumberland did, and was made a Duke. Soon after Lord Cardigan got the Dukedom without that limitation, and only lost the precedence he would have had over Lord Cardigan, who was a senior Earl. *Walpole.* —The last sentence of this note is unintelligible as it stands. Horace Walpole no doubt meant that had the Earl of Cardigan accepted the Dukedom when it was first offered to him, he would have retained his precedence over the Duke of Northumberland, to whom as an Earl he was senior.

[7] M. Tort.

told by those who have more phlegm, has lost all temper and discretion, abuses even his protectors, and the public, for being against him. This looks well for De Guisnes; if anything can pay him for what he has undergone! What courage any man must have that supports a controversy! It is treating your enemies with everything that can be said to your prejudice. How can one hate one enemy more than all?

As Strawberry furnishes so little, and this letter is not impatient to set out, I shall carry it to town, and keep it for more bulk. Yet I must commend myself a little first. I have finished this house and place these three years, and yet am content with and enjoy it—a very uncommon case in a country where nobody is pleased but while they are improving, and where they are tired the moment they have done. I choose my house should enjoy itself, which poor houses and gardens seldom do, for people go on mending till they die, and the next comer, who likes to improve too, begins to mend all that has been done. I knew what I wished; I have it, and am satisfied—and yet do not forget that I am one of my cotemporaries! I have all my life been blessed with knowing my own mind. I never wished to be *anybody*, that is, anything; and when the moments have arrived in which I might have been what I pleased, I resisted them, and persisted in my nothinghood. I hated Parliament, resolved to quit it, and did: was told I should repent, but never have. There ends my panegyric on myself; and pray don't think it very high-flown, when the sum of all is, that I am content with a small house and garden, and with being nobody.

Tuesday, 9th. Mr. Croft tells me your brother is in affliction for the loss of his eldest daughter, who was married to Rivington the printer. I did not know he had

an eldest daughter—oh, but yea—and more—all Fitzes[8]—but not by the same mother. You and I have no business to know of more than are in the Court Calendar. This is all town has added to my stock. Adieu!

1618. To the Rev. William Mason.

Strawberry Hill, May 7, 1775.

Of all the birds in the air, I like a Freemason best, and next a physician that gives one pills to purge melancholy. I am content to be sick, when my medicines are palatable. I remember the first words of a letter I wrote to you into Suffolk, and if you do too, repeat them if possible with exaggeration.

You are the idlest of beings, and never set pen to paper, or I am an indefatigable correspondent, and plague you with my letters. I cannot help it. Not that I have anything to say, or any reason for not waiting to hear from you. The reviews do not know yet what to say to your book, and so have not mentioned it; probably they are afraid of stumbling over the Æolian harp again, and are weighing every word they write in a pair of lexicon-scales. Lord Nuneham, who maintained to me at first that everybody was charmed with your work, does own now that some folks begin to carp at it, had cause to dislike it, have had time to whisper their prejudices, no matter. Its merit does not depend on the competence of the present age: you have fixed the method of biography, and whoever will write a life well must imitate you.

You have done another service that you are not aware of. I, who, simpleton as I was, loved to be an author, am so ashamed of my own stuff, and so convinced that nobody but you and Gray could write, have taken shame to myself,

[8] All natural children. *Walpole.*

and forsworn the press; yet as I cannot be idle, it is impossible, I have invented a new and very harmless way of *making books*, which diverts me as well, and brings me to no disgrace. I have just made a *new book*, which costs me only money, which I don't value, and time, which I love to employ. It is a volume of etchings by *noble authors*. They are bound in robes of crimson and gold: the titles are printed at my own press, and the pasting is *by my own hand*. What I shall *compose* next I do not know. As you too seem to have given over writing, I wish you would draw for me, or etch; but with your variety of talents, perhaps you are making another match between two musical instruments. Is Mynheer Drum contracted with Signora Flageolet? or are you contriving how to make one mouth blow a trumpet, and sing at the same time? Mr. Bentley was always inventing new dishes by compounding heterogeneous ingredients, and called it cultivating the Materia Edica; for you geniuses hate the beaten road. He never would draw with common colours, or Indian ink, but being purely indolent too, always dipped his brush in the first thing he met, no matter whether the ashes, or the oil and vinegar, or all together, and ten to one but he tasted too, whether they would not make a good sauce, for cleanliness was not one of his delicacies.

I have been at all the exhibitions, and do not find that we are got an inch nearer Raphael than we were. Sir Joshua has indeed produced the best portrait he ever painted, that of the Primate of Ireland[1], whom age has softened into a beauty: all the painters are begging to draw him, as they did from Reynolds's beggar-man. My brother has given me the view of Gray's tomb and churchyard, very prettily done, and inspired by Gray's own melancholy. I have hung it here in my favourite blue room, as a com-

Letter 1618.—[1] Dr. Richard Robinson, afterwards Lord Rokeby.

panion to Madame de Sévigné's Hôtel de Carnavalet, and call them my Penseroso and Allegro. Sir Edward was disappointed at your not revising his pentachord[2], for you inventors are jealous gods; but I assured him you had left town in a very few days after you were with him.

I am to dine on Monday at the Hôtel d'Harcourt[3]. The town says the father's kingdom is soon to be invaded by the Spaniards; but the ministers, who certainly ought to know best, swear it is not true; so to be sure it is not.

I forgot to tell you that our friend Mrs. D.[4] is one of the warmest admirers of Gray's Life; but then she is equally charmed with Mrs. Chapone's writings, and thinks they will go a great way towards making the Bible fashionable. She lent them to me, but alas! they could not have so much effect on me, had I wanted it, for I could not read the Madam's works themselves.

Have you had your summer, as we have? The fine ladies did not dare to ride on the causeway from Wednesday was se'nnight till last Friday, for fear of being tanned. We are now relapsed to fires. Adieu.

Yours most devotedly,

H. W.

P.S. I like the Hôtel d'Harcourt; it has *grand air* and a kind of Louis XIV old-fashionhood that pleases me. There is a large garden and new *parterre*, and we want some *treillage* if the Irish Exchequer would afford it. Lord N. says Oxford pouts at you as well as Cambridge. Lord

[2] An instrument invented by Sir Edward Walpole.

[3] Harcourt House, in Cavendish Square.

[4] Doubtless Mrs. Delany, who was on very friendly terms with both Mason and Walpole. She wrote to her brother, Mr. Granville (apparently in the year 1775), 'I have amused myself lately with Mr. Mason's publication of Mr. Gray's Memoirs and liked them extreamly. Mr. Mason's zeal for his friend is very amiable.' Mrs. Delany was also an admirer of the works of Mrs. Hester Chapone (1727–1801), *née* Mulso, authoress of *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind*.

Lyttelton does not admire. Mr. Palgrave, who was here this morning, says all the world admires, which is more than I demand. Pray, because you have written *the book*, do you never design to write anything else? Is the *English Garden* to be a fragment, and do you expect that anybody should finish it and write your life, as well as you have done both for Gray?

1619. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, May 17, 1775.

If you could not help writing, my dear Sir, to tell me of your nephew's arrival, I can as little help wishing you joy of it, though I wrote to you but last week. I told you how pleased and charmed you would be with him; and you must allow I am a good judge of the harmony of such natures as yours and his. Keep him as long as you can, and may the pure air of Florence restore Lady Lucy's[1] health!

I have nothing of news to add to my last. The ministers are easy about the Spanish fleet. For France, she has business of her own. There have been great tumults even in Paris on the dearness of corn. The King is already angry with his restored Parliament, who, fancying itself restored to liberty, took upon itself to examine the rioters. The new Well-beloved posted to his *lit de justice*, but was in such a passion that, though he attempted it four times, he could not speak; others may fancy he wanted words from more causes than one. I saw a gentleman the other day just arrived from Paris, who says the clergy are suspected of having excited the commotions. The ministers, who fear the return of the Duc de Choiseul, choose to impute them to him.

Letter 1619.—[1] Lady Lucy Mann, wife of the younger Sir Horace.

When I came out of town Lord Temple was thought dying[2]. The Duchess of Northumberland is still alive.

By what you say of Mr. Seymour[3], the Pretender and his wife should be at Paris; is that so? All the English seem to be in love with her: at least the future Lord Temple[4] was so.

You have not more masquerades in carnival than we have; there is one at the Pantheon to-night, another on Monday; and in June is to be a pompous one on the water, and at Ranelagh. This and the first are given by the club called the *Sçavoir Vivre*, who till now have only shone by excess of gaming. The leader is that fashionable orator Lord Lyttelton[5], of whom I need not tell *you* more. I have done with these diversions, and enjoy myself here. Your old acquaintance, Lord and Lady Dacre, and your old friend Mr. Chute, dined with me to-day: poor Lord Dacre[6] is carried about, though not worse than he has been these twenty years. Strawberry was in great beauty; what joy I should have in showing it to you! Is this a wish I must never indulge? Alas!

I have had a long chain of thoughts since I wrote the last paragraph. They ended in smiling at the word *never*. How one pronounces it to the last moment! Would not one think I counted on a long series of years to come? Yet no man has the termination of all his views more before his eyes, or knows better the idleness of framing visions to oneself. One passes away so soon, and worlds succeed to worlds, in which the occupiers build the same castles in the air. What is ours but the present moment? And how many of mine are gone! And what do I want

[2] He lived until 1779.

[3] Henry Seymour, of Knoyle, Wiltshire. Mann mentioned that he admired the Countess of Albany.

[4] Richard Grenville, who became the second Earl Temple. *Walpole.*—He became the third Earl.

[5] Thomas, second Lord Lyttelton; he had been at Florence. *Walpole.*

[6] Thomas Lennard Barrett; his wife was sister of Lord Camden. *Walpole.*

to show you? A plaything-vision, that has amused a poor transitory mortal for a few hours, and that will pass away like its master! Well, and yet is it not as sensible to conform to common ideas, and to live while one lives? Perhaps the wisest way is to cheat oneself. Did one concentre all one's thoughts on the nearness and certainty of dissolution, all the world would lie eating and sleeping like the savage Americans. Our wishes and views were given us to gild the dream of life, and if a Strawberry Hill can soften the decays of age, it is wise to embrace it, and due gratitude to the Great Giver to be happy with it. The true pain is the reflection on the numbers that are not so blessed; yet I have no doubt but the real miseries of life —I mean those that are unmerited and unavoidable,— will be compensated to the sufferers. Tyrants are a proof of an hereafter. Millions of men cannot be formed for the sport of a cruel child.

How happy is the Pretender in missing a crown! When dead, he will have all the advantage that other kings have, the being remembered; and that greater advantage, which kings who die in their childhood have, historians will say, he would have been a great king if he had lived to reign; and that greatest advantage which so very few of them have, his reign will be stained with no crimes and blunders. If he is at Florence, pray recommend me to him for his historian; you see I have all the qualities a monarch demands, I am disposed to flatter him. You may tell him too what I have done for his uncle Richard III[7]. The deuce is in it if I am not qualified for a Royal Historiographer, when I have whitewashed one of the very few whom my brethren, so contrary to their custom, have agreed to traduce. Adieu!

[7] Alluding to his *Historic Doubts* concerning Richard III.

22nd.

Our papers will tell you, or your own, that the Queen of Denmark is dead—happily for her, I think, if she had any feeling. They say it was a rapid putrid fever. I know no more of it, for I am but this moment come to town to get my mourning.

1620. To the Rev. William Mason.

May 27, 1775.

To Mrs. Crewe[1],

By the Honourable Charles Fox.

Where the loveliest Expression to Feature is join'd,
By Nature's most delicate pencil design'd,
Where Blushes unbidden and Smiles without Art
Speak the sweetness and feeling that dwell in the heart;
Where in Manners enchanting no Blemish we trace,
But the Soul keeps the Promise we had from the Face,
Sure Philosophy, Reason, and Coldness must prove
Defences unequal to shield us from Love.
Then tell me, mysterious Enchanter, O tell
By what wonderful Art, or by what magic Spell,
My Heart is so fenc'd, that for once I am wise
And gaze without Madness on Amoret's eyes:
That my Wishes which never were bounded before,
Are here bounded by Friendship, and ask for no more.
Is it Reason? No, that my whole Life will belie,
For who so at variance as Reason and I?
Is't Ambition that fills up each Chink of my Heart,
Nor allows to one softer Sensation a Part?
Ah! no! for in this all the World must agree,
That one Folly was never sufficient for me.
Is my Mind on Distress so intensely employ'd?
Or by Pleasure relax'd or Variety cloy'd?

Letter 1620.—[1] Frances (d. 1818), daughter of Fulke Greville; m. (1766) John Crewe, of Crewe Hall, Cheshire, who was created Baron Crewe in 1806.

For, alike in this only, Enjoyment and Pain
Both slacken the Springs of the Nerves which they strain.
That I've felt each Reverse that from Fortune can flow,
That I've tasted each Bliss which the Happiest know,
Has still been the whimsical Fate of my Life,
Where Anguish and Joy have been ever at strife.
But though vers'd in th' extremes both of Pleasure and Pain,
I am still but too ready to feel them again.
If then for this once in my Life I am free,
And escape from a Snare might catch wiser than me,
'Tis that Beauty alone but imperfectly charms,
For though Brightness may dazzle, 'tis Kindness that warms.
As on Suns in the Winter with Pleasure we gaze,
But feel not their force, though their Splendour we praise;
So Beauty our just Admiration may claim,
But Love, and Love only, our Hearts can inflame.

As I design to be very temperate in writing to you, you would not receive so sudden a return to yours, were it not to send you the foregoing verses, which, though current, are not yet got into the papers or magazines. I think you will like the ease and frankness of the lines, though they are not poetic: in that light, and as characteristic, they are pretty original—so they are for being love-verses without love; the author's reason for not having which is the worst part; and if poetry was peremptory logic, the inference would be that you must be in love with a woman before you can desire her: at least she must be in love with you, which I take to be seldom the case.

I am to have a longer copy of verses by Fitzpatrick [2], which I expect to like much, since he writes as easily as his friend, and is a more genuine poet. Lord Carlisle has written some too, to his wife's sister, Lady Louisa Leveson [3]:

[2] *Dorinda, a Town Eclogue*, printed at Strawberry Hill, as were Fox's verses.

[3] Lady Louisa Leveson-Gower, daughter of second Earl Gower (afterwards Marquis of Stafford);

I shall have them too, as a *noble* author's—but I have seen them and they are not worth sending; no more than some by Lord Palmerston, occasioned by others written some time ago by the Duchess of Devonshire when a girl to her father. These are a greater rarity, and I am laying out for them. Thank my stars I have done both with authorship and noble authors, for my Lord Lyttelton has printed a speech, though I thought we should not have had his till his execution. It is a poor affair, void of argument and grossly abusive on Lord Camden. It will be as difficult for the court to uphold his oratory as his character, if he has recourse to the press.

Burke has printed a second speech [4], which I prefer much to his first. It is grave, solid, temperate, and chaster from exuberant imagination. If his fancy breaks out, it does not soar above the third heaven and come tumbling down flat. Apropos to authors, the husband [5] of Mrs. Montagu of Shakespeareshire is dead, and has left her an estate of seven thousand pounds a year in her own power. Will you come and be a candidate for her hand? I conclude it will be given to a champion at some Olympic games, and were I she, I would sooner marry you than Pindar.

The history of the heroine Kingston, as registered in our daily chronicles, is literally authentic, and so is the respect paid to her in the King's Bench, though, I suppose, penned by herself,

> For little Brimstones oft submit to fate,
> That great ones may enjoy the world in state.

The intrepidity of her countenance, while her indictment was being read, was worthy of Joan of Arc. I am persuaded she will avoid any further trial.

m. (1777) Sir Archibald Macdonald, afterwards Chief Baron of the Exchequer.

[4] On Conciliation with America.

[5] Edward Montagu, grandson of first Earl of Sandwich.

Thank you for your Oxonian anecdotes, but alas! they may be paralleled all over the kingdom. In return I will write next week to France for the two tracts[6] you wot of: you shall not be idle for want of anything I can pimp for.

I am happily embarked on two vast folios of the *History of Dorsetshire*, which I prefer to every author of the age but one. I have picked up some excellent narratives of Mr. Bruce, but have not room for them; but here is what is better. He was asked before George Selwyn if the Abyssinians have any music? he replied, 'They have one *lyre*.' Selwyn whispered his neighbour, 'They have one less since he left their country.' Adieu! I remove to Strawberry to-morrow.

Yours ever,
H. W.

1621. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, June 5, 1775.

I am delighted in your satisfaction with your nephew; and now begin to fear the pain you will have in parting with him and his amiable family. The Emperor's presence will not compensate the loss, for you feel more in your private capacity than your public, though you are so excellent a *diplomatique*. You must lower your royal crest a little, for your Majesty's forces have received a check in America; but this is too sad a subject for mirth. I cannot tell you anything very positively: the ministers, nay the orthodox *Gazette*, holds its tongue. This day se'nnight it was divulged by a London *Evening Post* extraordinary, that a ship on its way to Lisbon happened to call *at* England, and left some very wonderful accounts, nay, and affidavits, saying, to wit, that General Gage had sent nine

[6] Watelet's Essay on Gardening, and Chabanon's *Sur la Manie des Jardins Anglais*.

hundred men to nail up the cannon and seize a magazine at Concord[1]; of which the accidental captain owns, two cannon were spiked or damaged. An hundred and fifty Americans, who swear they were fired on first, disliked the proceeding, returned blows, and drove back the party. Lord Percy was dispatched to support them, but new recruits arriving, his Lordship sent for better advice, which he received, as it was, to retire, which he did. The King's troops lost an hundred and fifty, the enemy not an hundred. The captain was sent for to be examined, but refused. He says Gage sent away a sloop four days before he sailed, which sloop, I suppose, is gone to Lisbon, for in eight days no news of it. The public were desired by authority to suspend their belief; but their patience is out, and they persist in believing the first account, which seems the rather probable, in that another account is come of the mob having risen at New York, between anger and triumph, and have seized, unloaded, and destroyed the cargoes of two ships that were going with supplies to Gage; and, by all accounts, that whole continent is in a flame.

So here is this fatal war commenced!

The child that is unborn shall rue
The hunting of that day!

We are perfectly easy about Spain's armada, and say that too is bound for Lisbon. The Prince of Masserano is arrived, and no doubt condemns our rebellious colonists highly. Those gentlemen do not seem to be at all afraid of your question, whether they could not be sent for over, and tried. A colonel of their militia has sworn before a justice of peace that he ordered his men to fire on the King's troops,

LETTER 1621.—[1] The skirmish at Lexington on April 19, 1775, the first fighting which took place between the regular troops and the Americans.

and has sent over a copy of his affidavit—perhaps in hopes of being knighted.

Well, we don't mind all this—we the nation. We go on diverting ourselves, and are to have a regatta on the Thames the end of this month. The French are grown *philosophes*, and we dance. Tell your sorrowful friend Mrs. Pitt, and the afflicted widow, that English ladies cry no longer. Low spirits are out of fashion. We have transplanted every folly under the heavens hither. We have had fandangos, and festinos, and regattas. If the Americans provoke us, we will sail forth in our Bucentaur and cuckold them with their spouse the Atlantic.

This is a gazette extraordinary, so need not be long; besides, I have been here these four days all alone, and know nothing but what the newspapers tell me. If it was not for you, I should not know there was such a person in the world as the Emperor. Our neighbour King Louis is gone to be crowned. He was besieged for three days in Versailles by twenty thousand men, and in danger of Lord Peterborough's [2] *sacre*, who, when he was shown the Sainte Ampoule at Rheims, and the monk asked him, 'Monsieur, est-ce que vous sacrez vos Rois?' replied, 'Non, Monsieur, nous les massacrons.' Insurrections in France! insurrections in Bohemia! insurrections in America! methinks the world is subject to centenary fevers! Adieu! the Horatii! I quite enjoy your mutual satisfaction in each other.

1622. To the Rev. William Cole.

Strawberry Hill, June 5, 1775.

I am extremely concerned, dear Sir, to hear you have been so long confined by the gout. The painting of your house may, from the damp, have given you cold—I don't

[2] Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, celebrated by Pope. *Walpole.*

conceive that paint can affect one otherwise, if it does not make one sick, as it does me of all things. Dr. Heberden, as every physician, to make himself talked of, will set up some new hypothesis, pretends that a damp house, and even damp sheets, which have ever been reckoned fatal, are wholesome; to prove his faith he went into his own new house totally unaired, and survived it. At Malvern they certainly put patients into sheets just dipped in the spring—however, I am glad you have a better proof that dampness is not mortal: and it is better to be too cautious than too rash. I am perfectly well and expect to be so for a year and a half—I desire no more of the bootikins than to curtail my fits.

Thank you for the note from North's life, though, having reprinted my *Painters*, I shall never have an opportunity of using it. I am still more obliged to you for the offer of an index to my *Catalogue*—but, as I myself know exactly where to find everything in it, and as I dare to say nobody else will want it, I shall certainly not put you to that trouble.

Dr. Glynn will certainly be most welcome to see my house, and shall, if I am not at home. Still I had rather know a few days before, because else he may happen to come when I have company, as I have often at this time of the year, and then it is impossible to let it be seen, as I cannot ask my company, who may have come to see it too, to go out, that somebody else may see it, and I should be very sorry to have the Doctor disappointed. These difficulties, which have happened more than once, have obliged me to give every ticket for a particular day; therefore, if Dr. Glynn will be so good as to advertise me of the day he intends to come here, with a direction, I will send him word what day he can see it.

I have just run through the two vast folios of Hutchins's

Dorsetshire. He has taken infinite pains; indeed, all but those that would make it entertaining.

Pray can you tell me anything of some relations of my own, the Burwells? My grandfather married Sir Jeffery Burwell's daughter, of Rougham in Suffolk. Sir Jeffery's mother, I imagine, was daughter of a Jeffery Pitman, of Suffolk; at least I know there was such a man as the latter, and that we quarter the arms of Pitman. But I cannot find who Lady Burwell[1], Sir Jeffery's wife, was. Edmondson has searched in vain in the Heralds' Office, and I have outlived all the ancient of my family so long, that I know not of whom to inquire, but you of the neighbourhood. There is an old walk in the park at Houghton, called Sir Jeffery's Walk, where the old gentleman used to teach my father, Sir Robert, his book. Those very old trees encouraged my father to plant at Houghton, when people used to try to persuade him nothing would grow there. He said, 'Why will not other trees grow as well as those in Sir Jeffery's Walk?' Other trees have grown to some purpose! Did I ever tell you that my father was descended from Lord Burleigh? The latter's grand-daughter, by his son Exeter, married Sir Giles Allington, whose daughter married Sir Robert Crane, father of Sir Edward Walpole's wife. I want but Lady Burwell's name to make my genealogic tree shoot out stems every way.

I have recovered a barony in fee, which has no defect but in being antecedent to any summons to Parliament, that of the Fitz Osberts; and on my mother's side it has mounted the Lord knows whither, by the Philipps's to Henry VIII, and has sucked in Dryden for a great-uncle; and by Lady Philipps's mother, Darcy, to Edward III,

LETTER 1622.—[1] She was the daughter of Thomas Derehaugh, of Colston Hall, Suffolk.

and there I stop, for brevity's sake—especially as Edward III is a second Adam; who almost is not descended from Edward? as posterity will be from Charles II and all the princes in Europe from James I. I am the first antiquary of my race—people don't know how entertaining a study it is. Who begot whom is a most amusing kind of hunting; one recovers a grandfather instead of breaking one's own neck—and then one grows so pious to the memory of a thousand persons one never heard of before. One finds how Christian names came into a family, with a world of other delectable erudition. You cannot imagine how vexed I was that Blomfield[2] died before he arrived at Houghton—I had promised myself a whole crop of notable ancestors—but I think I have pretty well unkennelled them myself. Adieu! dear Sir.

Yours ever,
H. W.

P.S. I found a family of Whaplode in Lincolnshire who give our arms, and have persuaded myself that Whaplode is a corruption of Walpole, and came from a branch when we lived at Walpole in Lincolnshire.

1623. To the Rev. William Mason.

Arlington Street, June 12.

I recommend this with your two tracts on gardening[1] to Mr. Fraser; you see I hasten to send you straw, that your brick-kiln may blaze. I shall send you soon Fitzpatrick's *Town Eclogue*, from my own furnace. The verses are charmingly smooth and easy, but I am much mistaken

[2] Rev. Francis Blomefield (1705–1752), who died before he had completed his *History of Norfolk*.

Letter 1623.—Misplaced by C. amongst letters of 1774. (See *Notes and Queries*, Oct. 9, 1897.)

[1] See note on letter to Mason of May 27, 1775.

if you like them so well as Charles Fox's, as the former have certainly no novelty to recommend them, though there is one line about *squeezing*[2] that is delightful.

The *Manie des Jardins Anglois* is very silly, and unpoetic even for French verse. T'other author[3] has stolen all his ideas from us, and is ungrateful, is very French too, absurd and superficial, meaning to be philosophic; has no idea of situation, but thinks it can be made; and in reality does not conceive helping or improving nature, but would make puppet-shows for different ranks. He puts me in mind of one of his countrymen, who seeing some of ours hang up their hats on a row of pegs at a tavern, said, 'On voit bien que c'est une nation qui pense.' I think they are ten times more foolish since they took to thinking.

By the waters of Babylon we sit down and weep, when we think of thee, O America! Tribulation on tribulation! Since Gage's defeat, eighteen, some say twenty-eight thousand men have invested Boston; ten thousand more are on their march from Rhode Island. Two ships laden with provisions for him have been destroyed at New York, and all his Majesty's friends turned out thence. *Nous ne sçavons plus à quel saint nous vouer.* The City says there must be a pacification and a change of actors. Much good may it do those who will read their parts! Old *Garrick*[4] perhaps will return to the stage, because he has no time to lose:—however, the manager's company[5] talks of a troop of Hessians, &c.

I have got another noble author, Lord Mahon. He writes on the gold coin; if he can make gold as well as coin, he will be of great use to his father-in-law *Garrick*, and a very good prop to his administration. Your old

2 'And oh! what bliss, when each alike is pleased,
The hand that squeezes, and the hand that's squeezed.'

3 A M. Watelet. 4 Lord Chatham. 5 The Ministry.

Pollio[6] is returned very lean and very deaf. Considering all things, methinks you might now hold a lodge, Mr. Mason. Adieu!

P.S. Here is the *Eclogue*.

1624. To Viscount Nuneham.

Strawberry Hill, June 14, 1775.

Having been absent hence a few days, I have but just now received your Lordship's most kind note with the direction, or should certainly have thanked you sooner, as I do most gratefully. I shall as gladly obey your commands before you go to Ireland, and will take the liberty of writing to know if my visit will not be unseasonable.

I am exceedingly concerned to hear of Lady Nuneham's loss[1], and when it is proper will entreat your Lordship to say how very much I interest myself in whatever touches her Ladyship.

Mr. Fitzpatrick has written a *Town Eclogue*, and has let me print it. The subject is not new, but as the versification is very good, I thought it might divert a melancholy quarter of an hour at Nuneham, and therefore enclose. I know it is not just the moment for mentioning it, or I would say how very preferably my press might be employed, if I could have my earnest wish. How sincerely do I say what is reduced to a common ceremony, that I am with the greatest regard your Lordship's, &c.

[6] Lord Holdernesse.

Letter 1624.—[1] The death of her sister, Hon. Catherine Vernon, third daughter of first Baron Vernon.

1625. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Friday night, 11 o'clock, June 23, 1775.

You was much in the right indeed, Madam, not to come to town for the foolish regatta, as I did, and of which I have seen no more than I do now. I went at six o'clock to Richmond House, and it was beautiful to see the Thames covered with boats, barges, and streamers, and every window and house-top loaded with spectators. I suppose so many will not meet again till the Day of Judgement, which was not to-day.

In the middle of the river was a street of lighters and barges covered with pent-houses like a carpenter's yard, which totally prevented all the other millions seeing anything. The rowers passed through this street, and so we never beheld them at all. It rained once or twice and cleared the gardens and shores, and now all the company is stewing in Ranelagh. A great deal of the show was spoilt by everybody being in black; it looked like a general mourning for Amphitrite, rather than for the Queen of Denmark. The *corps diplomatique* was in the Lord Mayor's barge. There are such tides of people in the streets, that I could scarce pass home. I feel as glad to be returned as I did from the Coronation, and I think will go to no more sights.

I know nothing more to tell your Ladyship. The town says it expects an embassy to Lord Chatham. I will not come to see his entry, for I have still less curiosity about ministers than puppet-shows. In truth I grow so old or so indolent, or so both, that I prefer the tranquillity of Strawberry to almost everything. But I will not tire your Ladyship with my own negativeness. I write only to prove what I hope is not necessary, how constantly you are

in my mind, and that I would tell you anything amusing if I knew it.

1626. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, July 6, 1775.

A month is elapsed since I wrote to you, I know; nor am I eager to resume the correspondence, when I have nothing pleasant to tell you. Indeed, can the events of a civil war ever be welcome news? One must be deeply embarked on one side or the other, if one ever rejoices. They who wish well to the whole can have but one cheerful moment, which is that of peace—a moment that seems at great distance! I know no details, for I inquire not after them. The general complexion is war. All advices speak the Americans determined, and report says the Government here intends to pursue the same plan. I told you at first I thought you and I should not see the end of this breach; and if we do not, I know what posterity will see, the ruin of both countries, at least of this. Can we support the loss of America, or a long war?

There is a black cloud nearer. The Livery of London have begun a quarrel with the King, and have actually proclaimed war on his ministers, as you will see by the papers. I do not take panic; but, if any blow should happen from America, the mob of London is a formidable foe on a sudden: a minister may be executed before he is impeached; and, considering the number of American merchants in the City, and of those who have connections in America, riots may be raised: but I hate to prophesy. I have always augured ill of this quarrel, and washed my hands of it. It has made me resume a thought, which my age and indolence do not incline me to, another journey to Paris. You will, perhaps, hear I am setting out before

my usual period of writing. There is another person[1] going abroad that rejoices me more, and who, I am sure, had better be out of England at this crisis. He is extremely well at present, yet certainly should not risk the winter here; he proposes to pass the next at Rome. I should like myself to spend it at Paris, but dare not hazard the gout out of my own house, unless things grow still more serious. I have long been sick of politics; when they are so very grave, they are painful; and though I have nothing to do with them, the ill-humour they occasion, and the perpetual discourse on them, are exceedingly disagreeable to one whose whole wishes are centred in repose.

I am come this morning from Lord Dacre's[2], where I lay last night, and return to my peaceful hill to-morrow. I will not read history there, but romances; and if the present age is determined the former shall be written in bloody characters, I will read as little of it as I can. During the first part of my life all was peace and happiness. The middle was a scene of triumph. I am sorry to think the last volume so likely to resemble a considerable part of our story. Who can wish to have lived during the wars of York and Lancaster; or from 1641 to 1660?

1627. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, July 7, 1775.

It is strange to say, Madam, that I who generally know my own mind as soon as I have a mind, and who am a very methodical general, have not yet settled the plan of my operations for my summer campaign. One of my expeditions will certainly be to Ampthill; but I cannot precisely say

Letter 1626.—[1] The Duke of Gloucester.
[2] Belhus, in Essex.

when, as I have not fixed the day when my squadron is to sail for the coast of France, which is to be the great *coup* of my measures. I do not stay to join or to watch the Spanish Armada, nor wait for the result of the American Congress; but a little business of my own throws uncertainty into all my deliberations, and is so little a business, that, like greater men, I am forced to disguise the true cause, and give it dignity by a veil of mystery. I have indeed already taken the field, for I came yesterday from Lord Dacre's, in Essex, where I stayed but one night, and am returning to my head quarters. I found nobody and heard nothing here, but a new rebuff given us by the Americans—I will not tell you where, because geography is not my forte, nor circumstances my talent; but they have burnt a schooner, and driven General Gage's devils out of a herd of swine, who ran violently into the sea, and lo! is not the place called Hog Island[1] to this day?

Pray, Madam, have you read the *Correspondents*[2]? I never heard of the book till two days ago. I think one cannot doubt the letters being genuine; but who has been so cruel as to publish them? and yet, except a little weakness, and it is very little to have but a little, there is nothing that can reflect but on the publishers. Methinks, when it is scandalous to open a private letter, they who publish private letters stand in a very foul predicament, while the authors are living and may be hurt by them. Do not the publishers accuse themselves of robbing or treachery? and by concealing themselves of a very black design? The publication in question comprehends many of these offences, for it appears by the letters that the authors were much afraid of their being seen, though more goodness of heart appears than

LETTER 1627.—[1] The skirmish at Hogg's Island took place in May.

[2] In his letter to Mason of July 10, 1775, Horace Walpole seems to hint at Lord Lyttelton and his daughter-in-law as the writers of the letters.

anything else. Merciful! if all the foolish things one writes in confidence were to be recorded! For my part I never care how silly I am in my letters, as I trust nonsense carries its own mortality along with it. At least if one is supposed to have common sense, one may trust, as Sir Godfrey Kneller did about his wretched daubings, that people will say, 'Oh, to be sure these could not be his.' I am not averse to preaching a little on this subject, my Lady, because—but somebody knocks. Good morrow, Madam.

1628. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, July 9, 1775.

The whole business of this letter would lie in half a line. Shall you have room for me on Tuesday the 18th? I am putting myself into motion that I may go farther. I told Madame du Deffand how you had scolded me on her account, and she has charged me to thank you, and tell you how much she wishes to see you too. I would give anything to go—But the going!—However, I really think I shall—But I grow terribly affected with a *maladie de famille*, that of taking root at home.

I did but put my head into London on Thursday, and more bad news from America. I wonder when it will be bad enough to make folks think it so, without going on! The stocks, indeed, begin to grow a little nervous, and they are apt to affect other pulses. I heard this evening here that the Spanish fleet is sailed, and that we are not in the secret whither[1]—but I don't answer for Twickenham gazettes, and I have no better. I have a great mind to tell you a Twickenham story; and yet it will be good for nothing, as I cannot send you the accent in a letter. Here it is, and you must try to set it to the right emphasis. One

Letter 1628.—[1] The fleet sailed to attack Algiers.

of our Maccaronis is dead, a Captain Mawhood, the tea-man's son. He had quitted the army, because his comrades called him Captain Hyson, and applied himself to learn the classics and freethinking; and was always disputing with the parson of the parish about Dido and his own soul. He married Miss Paulin's warehouse, who had six hundred a year; but, being very much out of conceit with his own canister, could not reconcile himself to her riding-hood—so they parted beds in three nights. Of late he has taken to writing comedies, which everybody was welcome to hear him read, as he could get nobody to act them. Mrs. Mawhood has a friend, one Mrs. V——, a mighty plausible good sort of body, who feels for everybody, and a good deal for herself, is of a certain age, wears well, has some pretensions that she thinks very reasonable still, and a gouty husband. Well! she was talking to Mr. Raftor about Captain Mawhood a little before he died. 'Pray, Sir, does the Captain ever communicate his writings to Mrs. Mawhood?'—'Oh dear, no, Madam; he has a sovereign contempt for her understanding.'—'Poor woman!'—'And pray, Sir,—give me leave to ask you: I think I have heard that they very seldom sleep together?'—'Oh, never, Madam! Don't you know all that?'—'*Poor woman!*'—I don't know whether you will laugh; but Mr. Raftor, who tells a story better than anybody, made me laugh for two hours. Good night!

1629. To the Rev. William Mason.

Strawberry Hill, July 10, 1775.

I have been so constantly here and know so little, that if I told you what I do know, it would be but a transcript of the newspapers. The general opinion is that the war is to be pursued: and so far we and the Americans agree that the news in the meadows (our Mall) last night was, that the

Congress has taken the same resolution; and as they have not quite so far to send troops, will probably be a little more alert in putting their resolutions in execution. The Admiral, I was told, too, thinks he shall be desired to convey the garrison of Boston, not into the heart of the colonies, but home. I am amazed the Parliament does not meet and vote that this will be a breach of the Act of Navigation. The colonies are really so cowardly, that they go on like the old song, beating those who never beat them in their lives, and have driven away all the cattle from General Gage's Smithfield, and burnt a schooner that he sent to defend them. As the stocks have shown no sensibility till now, I suppose some rich *butcher* has sold out. This is all I can tell you of politics.

To your other question, I doubt I shall not see Yorkshire this summer. I am actually thinking of a tour to Paris; and if I do go, it will be before the end of August. Shall I bring you a slice of their English gardens? or a whole one second-hand? They may be out of fashion by this time, and the moment anything is, they sell it.

Has a little book called the *Correspondents* strolled so far north? It is a singular publication, and an abominable one; at least I suspect the motive to be so. They are letters between a late grave noble author[1] and his daughter-in-law, before she married his son: they are perfectly innocent, and very good and very wise; but the spirit was not always entirely uppermost. They seem to be genuine, but if they are, one must guess and abhor the publisher.

Mrs. Wood publishes an Essay, which her husband[2] showed me and I liked, on Homer's country. My late brethren, the Antiquaries, have given a third volume, with some pretty plates of horns, and some trifling trinkets,

Letter 1629. — [1] Perhaps Lord Lyttelton. [2] Robert Wood, sometime Under Secretary of State; d. 1771.

dissertations on cock-fighting and shoeing horses, and half a volume on their print of the interview in the Vale of Cloth of Gold, and the room at Cowdry[3], in which I am censured for liking it only as a curiosity and not as a picture, though there is no more perspective or drawing than in an Indian screen. To stamp my doom, in the index is said, *the Cowdry picture defended against Mr. W.*—see what it is to try to teach owls to be singing-birds! I was the first soul that ever endeavoured to introduce a little taste into English antiquities, and had persuaded the world not to laugh at our Hearnes and Hollingsheds, and the graceless loggerheads fly in my face! but I have left them to themselves, and could not have left them in worse hands.

This letter is only chaperon to a parcel that I must beg you to convey to Peckitt at York, and which I send open to save troubling you with the purport (is not this an *Iricism*?): when you have read it or not, as you please, you will be so good as to seal it.

July 12th.

Since I began my letter two days ago, I have taken my resolution; and shall set out on the 14th of next month, to be back in the beginning of October, by which time I suppose you will have frightened the Americans out of their senses, or the Americans the ministers into theirs.

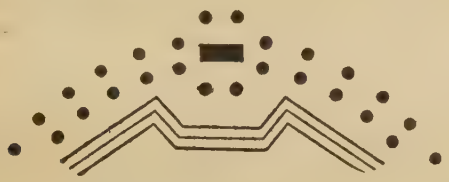
I have not yet seen the reviews for this month; those of the last were exceedingly civil to you. One piece of service you have rendered me. The proprietor of the asterisk[4] on Lord Clarendon's *History* has certainly reconnoitred himself,

[3] The frescoed room at Cowdray was thus mentioned in the *Anecdotes of Painting*:—'Though the histories represented there, the habits and customs of the times, make that room a singular curiosity, they are its only merit. There is nothing good either in the designs, disposition, or colouring.' The frescoes perished in the fire of 1793.

[4] Richard Owen Cambridge, whose name is represented by two asterisks in Mason's *Memoirs of Gray*. His criticisms on Clarendon's *Life* (before its publication) are mentioned in Gray's letter to Mason of July 23, 1759.

for he has not called on me since the publication, though very civil when we meet, yet never opening his mouth on that subject. I bear this misfortune with great philosophy, as I always do everything I do not care about.

My Lord of Rochester[5] has consulted me for an altar-piece for the choir at Westminster. I have suggested an octagon canopy of open arches, like Chichester Cross, to be elevated on a flight of steps, with the altar in the middle, and semi-circular arcades to join the stalls, so that the Confessor's chapel and tombs may be seen through in perspective. His Lordship, indeed, wanted to remove that whole chapel, but his Chapter luckily opposed. Here is the ground-plot of my idea: if you approve it you may draw the elevation as beautifully as you please.



1630. To Viscount Nuneham.

Strawberry Hill, July 18, 1775.

I shall be at Park Place next week, my dear Lord, and if you assure me that I shall not be troublesome either to Lady Nuneham or yourself, I will have the honour of passing a night at Nuneham, and asking your commands to Paris, whither I am going next month,—with great satisfaction in one respect, the certainty of finding the Hôtel d'Harcourt open next winter. I should be ashamed of such a trip at my age, if it was not to see an older person; yet I shall not go *incog.* and call myself *Dr. W.*[1], but what I always am, &c.

[5] John Thomas; d. 1793.

Letter 1630.—[1] Lord Mansfield, on a recent visit to Paris, had called himself 'Dr. Murray.'

1631. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, July 23, 1775.

Lady, thou lettest not thy servant depart in peace! but you must. My pen is truly grown a *grey* goose-quill, and has lost its pith. It never had much imagination, and what it had is gone. Indolence has taken total possession, and comprises my whole story. I have done nothing but bask in the sun, gather hampers of orange-flowers, and enjoy this celestial summer. I believe Joshua has bid the sun stand still, for there has not been a bad day since the first of December. I had rather impute my supineness to this Asiatic season than to the fifty-seven winters I have known; but I must burst my chains and go to Paris, which I doubt I shall not find a *fontaine de jouvence.*

I have dined at Muswell Hill, and the next day the Beauclerks, Miss Lloyd and I, went to Old Windsor to see poor Mr. Bateman's auction. It was a melancholy sight to me in more lights than one. I have passed many pleasing days there with him and Lady Hervey, and felt additional pain by reflections on my child Strawberry!

All pulled to pieces, and sold by the person he loved and left it to! So was poor Lady Hervey treated! I bought her picture there, left for sale. Indeed, Lord Bateman made amends, for he left his own and his house's portraits there too for sale, with a lot of shalots, four acres of beans, and a parcel of human bones! This is a golden age literally, and one should not wonder if the people sold their children as the negroes do. I purchased a cargo of ancient chairs[1], and they at least have found a resting-place in their old age. The Beauclerks and the Virgin returned and passed two days

Letter 1631. — [1] 'Eight very ancient Welsh chairs;' they were placed in the Great Cloister at Strawberry Hill.

here. On Wednesday I go to Park Place and Nuneham; but I perceive I shall lose my place of gazetteer to your Ladyship. Perhaps you will think I am going to have a better, when I tell you an excellent story and quote my author, Lord North. Mr. Cambridge, with all his propensity to credit new-imported marvels, was struck with hearing Mr. Bruce affirm having sent some camels to Abyssinia, and suspended his faith till the fact could be examined. He galloped[2] to Soame Jenyns, and begged to have the registers of exportation in the Board of Trade searched. After some days, Jenyns wrote to tell him that he had scrutinized all the records relating to Philadelphia, Carolina, Virginia, &c., &c., and did indeed find a prodigious number of the species in question had gone to all those provinces, but that they did not spell their names like the *camels* he wotted of.

Well, Madam, if I have moulted my activity, at least my obedience remains in full feather. You say you have written and sealed your justification of yourself and your opinion of the *Correspondents*, but I am sure I have received no such letter. I will say no more on mine; I have no affectation about them; you see I answer the moment I receive yours, and the nonsense in waiting always serves to fill them. If they are preserved, they will prove that I took no care of my reputation, and that your Ladyship had not the best taste in the world in being content with such letters. One comfort the worst writers may have, that, if their follies are handed down, the devil will be in it if any mortal can read a hundred-thousandth part of what is written; and it signifies little whether such things are burnt or slumber on the shelves of a library.

[2] Cambridge habitually rode fast.

1632. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 3, 1775.

I can tell your Ladyship nothing about the *Correspondents* but what I *don't* know, which is what people generally tell.

I did believe the letters genuine, and that they passed between the old Lord and his daughter-in-law before she was so. Now it seems the executors deny their authenticity, so I do not believe it any longer, because anybody is at least better authority than everybody; for one person *may* speak truth, which all the world rarely does. I know still less of Lady Luxborough's[1] *Letters*, but expect to be diverted. I remember her wearing her little wizen husband's picture in her great black bush of hair; then she fell in love with Parson Dalton[2] for his poetry, and they rhymed together till they chimed; and then I never saw or heard of her any more, till she revived in Mr. Shenstone's *Letters*, and was a great performer in his ballad *Arcadia*. I think these materials promise, considering too that the heroine was sister both of Lord Bolingbroke and Hollis St. John[3]. I expect a mixture of Mrs. Eliza Thomas[4], Machiavel, and Shuter.

I certainly did not send you, Madam, Lady Craven's verses, nor intend it, though they are extremely pretty. She did not give me leave, and without it you know I would not. Nay, I don't think I should even with her permission,

Letter 1632.—[1] Hon. Henrietta St. John (d. 1756), daughter of first Viscount St. John; m. (1727) Robert Knight, cr. (Aug. 8, 1745) Baron Luxborough, of Shandon in Ireland; cr. Earl of Catherlough in 1763.

[2] Rev. John Dalton (1709–1763), poet; he adapted *Comus* for the stage.

[3] Fourth son of first Viscount St. John; d. 1738.

[4] Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas (1677–1731), known as 'Corinna,' a writer of poetry, and correspondent of Dryden. After endeavouring to make a livelihood in a questionable manner, she was thrown into the Fleet Prison, and died, though not actually in prison, in great poverty.

for she makes an Apollo of me, and, if the eight other Muses called me so too, I would not accept the title without any pretensions.

Tuesday se'nnight is fixed for my voyage. I doubt it will not be in my power to see Ampthill till my return.

I am in great distress, with a near relation dying in my house. You have heard me mention Mrs. Daye[5]: they have let her come from Chichester in the last stage of an asthma and dropsy. I can neither leave her here with only servants, nor know how to convey her back; but I will not disturb your happiness with melancholy stories, Madam. For political mishaps, they are very endurable. One loves one's country, but then one takes no more part than comes to the share of an individual; besides, when one has lived a good while, events strike one the less. I have seen my country's barometer up at Minden and down at Derby; I have worn laurels and crackers, and sackcloth and ashes. At last I am grown like sauntering Jack, and bear revolutions with much philosophy:—

> My billet at the fire is found,
> Whoever is depos'd or crown'd;

but I go no farther; one has griefs enough of one's own, without fretting because Cousin America has eloped with a Presbyterian parson.

I have crammed my cloister with three cart-loads of lumbering chairs from Mr. Bateman's, and at last am surfeited with the immovable movables of our forefathers.

Thank you for advising me, Madam, not to trust to anybody's love. In good truth I am cured of that as well as of other delusions, and so will Mr. Crawfurd be if he lives as long. I hope he will meet me at Paris. I seldom ask him to come hither, because I cannot amuse him, and

[5] Mrs. Day or Daye was a natural daughter of Sir Robert Walpole; she died in Oct. 1775.

because he would only disappoint me if he promised to come. There are few I have a better opinion of, or have more good will to, and he is sure he is welcome whenever he likes to come; but I care so little about the present age, which is all he can care about, that I conclude young people can only be civil and weary of me, and therefore never press myself upon them.

When I return from Paris I shall have some novelty, and you shall see me as modernized as possible. If Marshal Richelieu has a casque of pink and sable plumes, I will have one too. I will learn to sing the freshest couplets, and will be as accurate as Lady Mary Coke in all the ceremonial of Madame Clotilde's espousals[6], though I fear the good old form of her going to bed with the ambassador's leg is out of fashion, though a Christian nudity of excellent edification. Well, now we are talking of weddings, &c., I shall take the liberty of transcribing the following lines, which Lord Huntingdon found on the window of an inn, and gave to Mr. Conway. Some tender swain had written very illegibly his fair one's name in this usual aubergical exclamation:—

Adorable Miss Priscilla Plaw!

Another unfeeling savage wrote under[7],

. . . . . .

I found Lady Jersey at Nuneham, with a pretty little girl, who will be the picture of her father as soon as she cuts her nose, and is bigger already. There was Mr. Whitehead[8], the Laureate, too, who, I doubt, will be a little puzzled, if he has no better a victory than the last against Cæsar's next birthday. There was a little too much of the *vertere*

[6] To the Prince of Piedmont.

[7] The lines were considered by Lord Lyveden, the editor of the letters to Lady Ossory, as too coarse to be printed.

[8] William Whitehead (1715-1785).

funeribus triumphos for a complimentary ode in the last action.

I hear that the Congress have named General Washington Generalissimo, with two thousand a year and five pounds a day for his table; he desired to be excused receiving the two thousand. If these folks will imitate both the Romans and Cromwellians in self-denial and enthusiasm, we shall be horridly plagued with them. Colonel Lee[9] is the third on the staff; I forget the second's name. They say all the regiments in Ireland are going to Boston, and fifty thousand Hanoverians coming to guard Ireland—*c'est un furieux remue-ménage*; but I don't understand these things, and wish your Ladyship good night.

1633. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 3, 1775.

In spite of all my modesty, I cannot help thinking I have a little something of the prophet about me. At least we have not conquered America yet. I did not send you immediate word of our victory at Boston[1], because the success not only seemed very equivocal, but because the conquerors lost three to one more than the vanquished. The last do not pique themselves upon modern good breeding, but level only at the officers, of whom they have slain a vast number. We are a little disappointed, indeed, at their fighting at all, which was not in our calculation. We knew we could *conquer America in Germany*, and I doubt had better have gone thither now for that purpose, as it does not appear hitherto to be quite so feasible in America itself. However, we are determined to know the

[9] Colonel (afterwards Major-General) Charles Lee (1731–1782). He served in the English army, 1746–74. He was appointed to a command in the American army in June 1775.

Letter 1633. — [1] The battle of Bunker's Hill, on June 17, 1775.

worst, and are sending away all the men and ammunition we can muster. The Congress, not asleep neither, have appointed a Generalissimo, Washington, allowed a very able officer, who distinguished himself in the last war. Well! we had better have gone on robbing the Indies; it was a more lucrative trade.

We are in no pain about the Spanish fleet. Our papers say it has its hands full at Algiers, or Tunis, I forget which. There are so many people who take care of the geography of a war, that I never trouble my head about it. At present I am thinking of nothing but my journey to Paris, whither I am bound on the 15th. It is a little late I own for such a trip, and I did not think I should have so much resolution again; but my dear old blind woman [2] has begged it, and I cannot refuse, though I feel how terrible the parting will be, since I cannot expect to see her again. She is almost seventy-nine! In fact, her lamp burns as brightly as ever; but I am sure mine grows dim, and my spirits scarce serve

To rock the cradle of reposing age!

Your brother has recovered his activity so far as to go to Linton, where he has not been these four years.

Your friend, the Duchess of Beaufort [3], has already found a great and proper party for Lady Mary [4]; Lord Granby [5] has proposed, and you may be sure was not rebuffed. We have no other news but the American, which keeps our summer in full talk. Every day proclaims something, but so many lies, that I always wait for the echo; and advise you to do so too, or you will have many abortive beliefs.

[2] Madame la Marquise du Deffand. *Walpole.*

[3] Widow of Lord Noel Somerset, Duke of Beaufort. *Walpole.*

[4] Lady Mary Somerset.

[5] Grandson and successor of John Manners, Duke of Rutland. *Walpole.*

The heroine Kingston is almost forgotten. Foote had a mind to have revived her story on the stage; but Lord Hertford would not license his piece[6]. It is still thought she will be tried and convicted, but her Countess-hood will save her Duchess-hood from being burnt in its hand. Adieu!

1634. To the Rev. William Mason.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 7, 1775.

Let me tell you you have no more taste than Dr. Kenrick[1], if you do not like Madame de Sévigné's Letters. Read them again; they are one of the very few books, that, like Gray's Life, improve upon one every time one reads them. You have still less taste, if you like my letters, which have nothing original, and if they have anything good so much the worse, for it can only be from having read her letters and his. He came perfect out of the egg-shell, and wrote as well at eighteen as ever he did; nay, letters better, for his natural humour was in its bloom, and not wrinkled by low spirits, dissatisfaction, or the character he had assumed. I do not care a straw whether Dr. Kenrick and Scotland can persuade England that he was no poet. There is no common sense left in this country:—

With Arts and Sciences it travelled West.

The Americans will admire him and you, and they are the only people by whom one would wish to be admired. The world is divided into two nations—men of sense that *will* be free, and fools that like to be slaves. What a figure do two great empires make at this moment! Spain, mistress of Peru and Mexico, amazes Europe with an invincible

[6] It was called *A Trip to Calais*, and was acted afterwards, but much altered. *Walpole.*

Letter 1634.—[1] William Kenrick, LL.D. (d. 1779), who had written slightingly of Gray's poetry in the *London Review.*

armada; at last it sails to Algiers, and disbarks its whole contents, even to the provisions of the fleet. It is beaten shamefully, loses all its stores, and has scarce bread left to last till it gets back into its own ports!

Mrs. Britannia orders her senate to proclaim America a continent of cowards, and vote it should be starved unless it will drink tea with her. She sends her only army to be besieged in one of their towns, and half her fleet to besiege the *terra firma*; but orders her army to do nothing, in hopes that the American senate at Philadelphia will be so frightened at the British army being besieged in Boston, that it will sue for peace. At last she gives her army leave to sally out, but being twice defeated, she determines to carry on the war so vigorously till she has not a man left, that all England will be satisfied with the total loss of America; and if everybody is satisfied, who can be blamed? Besides, is not our dignity maintained? have not we carried our majesty beyond all example? When did you ever read before of a besieged army threatening military execution on the country of the besiegers! *car tel est notre plaisir!* But, alack! we are like the mock doctor; we have made the heart and the liver change sides; *cela étoit autrefois ainsi, mais nous avons changé tout cela!*

I will certainly visit Monsr. Watelet's garden that he has curled and powdered *à l'angloise.* I shall like to be amused with less serious follies than our own, though I doubt I shall find they laugh a little more at us than we can at them. Well! I will wrap myself up in my *Robinhood*! They cannot say the good old man my father did it. Have you heard the history of Foote and her Grace of Kingston? She applied to the Lord Chamberlain, and prevented the piece being licensed, though Foote had an audience, and with his usual modesty assured her he had not had her Grace in view. The dame, as if he had been a member of

Parliament, offered to buy him off. Aristophanes's Grecian virtue was not to be corrupted; but he offered to read the piece, and blot out whatever passages she would mark, that she thought applicable to her case. She was too cunning to bite at this; and they parted. He swears he will not only print his comedy, but act her in Lady Brumpton. He has already printed his letter to Lord Hertford, and not content with that, being asked why it was not licensed, replied, 'Why, my Lord Hertford desired me to make his youngest son a box-keeper, and because I would not, he stopped my play.' Upon my word, if the stage and the press are not checked, we shall have the army, on its return from Boston, besieged in the Haymarket itself. What are we come to, if Maids of Honour cannot marry two husbands in quiet?

Well, General Gage is recalled, and is to be hanged. We had conquered America by this time, they say, if he had not betrayed us, and desired the provincials to block him up; so *en attendant* Hancock[2] and Adams[3], and Putnam[4] and Washington, you may divert yourselves with executing your own General. Voltaire will abuse you, as he did about poor Byng; but really a government must condemn somebody, or the mob—but I am going to Paris, and leave you to your own devices. Don't finish your essay on gardening till I bring you the newest improvements from the Opera, where to be sure the Elysian fields will be laid out *naturally*. If anything strikes me particularly, you shall hear from me, but as my stay will be short, I don't promise, for I have been so often at Paris, that my staring is extremely *émoussé*,

[2] John Hancock (d. 1793), President of the Congress of Massachusetts in 1774.

[3] John Adams (1735–1826), Representative of Massachusetts in the Congress of 1774; Commissioner to the court of France, 1778; first Ambassador from the United States to Great Britain, 1785–87; President of the United States, 1797–1801.

[4] Major-General Israel Putnam (1718–1790), commanding under Washington. He was prominent in the battle of Bunker's Hill.

and one must travel to Abyssinia, to find anything very new. Adieu!

Yours entirely,
H. W.

1635. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 9, 1775.

Well! I am going *tout de bon*, and heartily wish I was returned. It is a horrid exchange, the cleanness and verdure and tranquillity of Strawberry, for a beastly ship, worse inns, the *pavé* of the roads bordered with eternal rows of maimed trees, and the racket of an *hôtel garni*! I never dote on the months of August and September, enlivened by nothing but Lady Greenwich's speaking-trumpet—but I do not want to be amused—at least never at the expense of being put in motion. Madame du Deffand, I am sure, may be satisfied with the sacrifice I make to her!

You have heard, to be sure, of the war between your brother and Foote; but probably not how far the latter has carried his impudence. Being asked why Lord Hertford had refused to license his piece, he replied, 'Why, he asked me to make his youngest son a box-keeper, and because I would not, he stopped my play.' The Duchess of Kingston offered to buy it off, but Foote would not take her money, and swears he will act her in Lady Brumpton; which to be sure is very applicable.

I am sorry to hear Lord Villiers is going to drag my Lady through all the vile inns in Germany. I think he might go alone.

George Onslow told me yesterday, that the American Congress had sent terms of accommodation, and that your brother told him so; but a strange fatality attends George's news, which is rarely canonical; and I doubt this intelli-

gence is far from being so. I shall know more to-morrow, when I go to town to prepare for my journey on Tuesday. Pray let me hear from you, enclosed to M. Panchaud.

I accept with great joy Lady Aylesbury's offer of coming hither in October, which will increase my joy in being at home again. I intend to set out on my return the 25th of next month.

Sir Gregory Page[1] has left Lord Howe eight thousand pounds at present, and twelve more after his aunt Mrs. Page's death.

Tuesday, 10th.

I cannot find any grounds for believing that any proposals are come from the Congress. On the contrary, everything looks as melancholy as possible. Adieu!

1636. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 10, 1775.

If I am become mysterious, Madam, I must be grown as old as Methusaleh, or by keeping bad company have contracted habits of circumspection, which I always despised.

Is it mystery not to notify royal pregnancies? Consider how *bourgeois* it would be in me to talk of her Highness my niece; there is the source of my reserve. Oh, but a babe of Brunswick to be born at Rome! what an event! very well, Madam, it will be time enough six months hence to talk of that. For my escape, and the valour of my servant, it is a mystery still to myself. I believe a man did intend to rob me one morning as I went to Hanworth, because when I ordered my footman to produce a blunderbuss that was under the seat of the chaise, the fellow galloped off; but if David is intituled in any part in this

Letter 1635.—[1] Sir Gregory Page, second Baronet, of Wricklemarsh, in Kent. Mrs. Page was his sister-in-law.

history that I have suppressed, it is for being such a fool as to bid the man follow the chaise when he inquired the way. The whole conduct was my own in this no adventure, which I see has swelled to a magnitude. I had forgotten it, and it certainly was not worth relating; so pray, your Ladyship, let me be restored to my character of indiscreet in your good opinion, or my neighbour Mr. Ellis will come and trust me with some state secret out of the Utrecht Gazette. I have escaped many such sage friends by not reverencing mystery, to the prejudice of my preferment, no doubt; but I do not regret my misfortune, though my error is so evident. When Mentor and Sir Richard Lyttelton were lads of fifteen, they were walking in the garden at Hampton Court, with that old driveller Lord Fitzwater. Lyttelton rattled away as usual. As soon as the peer was gone, Master Mentor said to his companion, 'Dick, how could you talk so imprudently before a privy councillor!' Could such premature wisdom fail to produce a nurse of future Cæsars? and have not I now proved to your Ladyship that you accuse me unjustly of being too cautious?

Apropos, Telemachus[1] was entertained yesterday at Oatlands; the guests besides were Lord and Lady Holderness, Lord and Lady Hertford, Fitzroy, George Onslow and his wife. It is pity the first glimpse of empire was such a paradise; he will conclude it is Elysium from thence to the Orkneys.

Methinks I in my turn might complain of reserve. *Only two bobbins of gold for your tambour*, and *I had rather be excused more commissions.* I beg you will honour me with any you please; I will not excuse myself, unless they would involve me in a dispute with a Custom House officer at Dover, and applications afterwards, which I have not spirit

LETTER 1636.—[1] The Prince of Wales.

to encounter. I propose being at home the first week in October. Mr. Crawfurd and *his lady* and *family*, the papers say, are set out for Spa. Lord and Lady Villiers are going to Vienna, not terrified by the persecutions which were executed on an unhappy princess[2] who twice took the same journey.

As your Ladyship was scandalized with the verses, though I assure you I gave copies to two Countesses, who desired to have them, I will now transcribe a more serious tale, which I found the other night in Froissart, and which shows how true gallantry is degenerated. He is speaking of Edward III's first expedition to France (I wish I could write the black letter). 'They had with them Yonge Bachelars, who had eche of them one of their eyen closed with a peace of sylke. It was sayd, how they had made a vowe among the ladyes of their countrey, that they wolde nat se but with one eye tyll they had done some dedes of armes in Fraunce.' Is not it plain, Madam, that we were greater heroes when we were in love and hoodwinked, than now that we have no sentiment, and have our eyes broad open?

Arlington Street, Aug. 11, 1775[3].

Mr. and *Mrs.* Crawfurd are not yet gone. Have you heard that Mrs. St. Jack[4] has declared that if the Colonel goes to America, she will accompany him? G. Selwyn says she will make an excellent *breastwork*. Adieu, Madam! I wish you much pleasure, shooting, gold cups, judges, and all the joys the country can afford.

[2] Lady Mary Coke.

[3] Hitherto printed as a separate letter.

[4] Barbara, daughter of Colonel Thomas Bladen; m. (1771) Colonel (afterwards General) Hon. Henry St. John, second son of second Viscount St. John.

1637. To the Countess of Ailesbury.

From t'other side of the water, Aug. 17, 1775.

Interpreting your Ladyship's orders in the most personal sense, as respecting the dangers of the sea, I write the instant I am landed. I did not, in truth, set out till yesterday morning at eight o'clock; but finding the roads, horses, postillions, tides, winds, moons, and Captain Fectors in the pleasantest humour in the world, I embarked almost as soon as I arrived at Dover, and reached Calais before the sun was awake;—and here I am for the sixth time in my life, with only the trifling distance of seven-and-thirty years between my first voyage and the present. Well! I can only say in excuse, that I am got into the land of Strulbrugs, where one is never too old to be young, and where *la béquille du père Barnabas* blossoms like Aaron's rod, or the Glastonbury thorn.

Now, to be sure, I shall be a little mortified, if your Ladyship wanted a letter of news, and did not at all trouble your head about my navigation. However, you will not tell one so; and therefore I will persist in believing that this good news will be received with transport at Park Place, and that the bells of Henley will be set a-ringing. The rest of my adventures must be deferred till they have happened, which is not always the case of travels. I send you no compliments from Paris, because I have not got thither, nor delivered the bundle which Mr. Conway sent me. I did, as your Ladyship commanded, buy three pretty little medallions in frames of filigraine, for our dear old friend[1]. They will not ruin you, having cost not a guinea and a half; but it was all I could find that was genteel and portable; and as she does not measure by guineas, but

Letter 1637.—[1] Madame du Deffand. *Walpole.*

attentions, she will be as much pleased as if you had sent her a dozen acres of Park Place. As they are in bas-relief, too, they are feelable, and that is a material circumstance to her. I wish the Diomede had even so much as a pair of Nankin!

Adieu, toute la chère famille! I think of October with much satisfaction; it will double the pleasure of my return.

1638. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Roye, Aug. 18, 1775.

The last paragraph of your letter made me smile, Madam. If Colonel Mars were setting out for America with Jove's own thunder-bolt in his portmanteau, Venus could not have encouraged him by a more inspiring epistle. So my glory is to redound to your Ladyship! Alas! I am grieved to the heart that my journey has been hitherto so tranquil and obscure, that, I doubt, not the reflection of a ray will fall to your Ladyship's share. I slipped into Calais with as little *éclat* as a smuggler. No garrison under arms received me, nor commandant conducted me in ceremony to the citadel. In short, the King of France had forgotten to write a post-script in my favour, when he ordered royal honours for my niece[1]; and so, by that neglect, no regard was paid to my avuncular dignity. I was not very sorry, as walking is not one of my excellences; in my best days Mr. Winnington said I tripped like a peewit; and if I do not flatter myself, my march at present is more like a dabchick's.

I arrived at Dover in such a clear blue evening, and saw the French coast so distinctly, that, had I had but a pair of miracle-shoes, I thought I could have gone over on foot in a quarter of an hour; but I am not going to relate my journey, which was written seven-and-thirty years ago, and

Letter 1638.—[1] The Duchess of Gloucester.

is in print (v. Gray's letters). Well! I have not lived so long for nothing; I have at least learnt wit enough not to waste six days between Calais and Paris; but, as Mr. Mason says, I was young and giddy, and thought I had time enough and to spare, which is not quite the case at present. I hope my own biographer will give as good a reason for my being here at all; but that is his business, not mine.

1639. To the Countess of Ailesbury.

Paris, Aug. 20, 1775.

I have been sea-sick to death; I have been poisoned by dirt and vermin; I have been stifled by heat, choked by dust, and starved for want of anything I could touch: and yet, Madam, here I am, perfectly well, not in the least fatigued; and, thanks to the rivelled parchments, formerly faces, which I have seen by hundreds, I find myself almost as young as when I came hither first in the last century. In spite of my whims, and delicacy, and laziness, none of my grievances have been mortal: I have borne them as well as if I had set up for a philosopher, like the sages of this town. Indeed, I have found my dear old woman so well, and looking so much better than she did four years ago, that I am transported with pleasure, and thank your Ladyship and Mr. Conway for driving me hither. Madame du Deffand came to me the instant I arrived, and sat by me whilst I stripped and dressed myself; for, as she said, since she cannot see, there was no harm in my being stark. She was charmed with your present; but was so kind as to be so much more charmed with my arrival, that she did not think of it a moment. I sat with her till half an hour after two in the morning, and had a letter from her before my eyes were open again. In short, her soul is immortal, and forces her body to bear it company.

This is the very eve of Madame Clotilde's wedding; but Monsieur Turgot, to the great grief of Lady Mary [1], will suffer no cost, but one banquet, one ball, and a play at Versailles. Count Virri gives a banquet, a *bal masqué*, and a firework. I think I shall see little but the last, from which I will send your Ladyship a rocket in my next letter. Lady Mary, I believe, has had a private audience of the ambassador's leg, but *en tout bien et honneur*, and only to satisfy her ceremonious curiosity about any part of royal nudity. I am just going to her, as she is at Versailles; and I have not time to add a word more to the vows of your Ladyship's

Most faithful,
HOR. WALPOLE.

1640. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Paris, Aug. 23.

I should have a heart of adamant, Madam, if I was not become a perfect Frenchman. Nothing could exceed my reception. I do not talk only of my dear old friend, whose kindness augments with the century. The Maréchales de Luxembourg and Mirepoix came to Paris to see me; the Duchesse de la Vallière met me in the outward room and embraced me. I am smeared with red, like my own crest the Saracen, and, in short, have been so kissed on both cheeks, that had they been as large as Madame de Virri's, they would have lost leather; but enough of vanity. I have landed on the moment of pomp and diversion. Madame Clotilde was married on Monday morning, and at night was the *banquet royal*,—the finest sight *sur la terre*,—I believe, for I did not see it. I husband my pleasures and my person, and do not expose my wrinkles *au grand jour*.

Letter 1639.—[1] Lady Mary Coke.

Last night I did limp to the *bal paré*, and as I am the hare with many real friends, was placed on the *banc des ambassadeurs*, just behind the royal family. It was in the theatre, the bravest in the universe; and yet taste predominates over expense. What I have to say I can tell your Ladyship in a word, for it was impossible to see anything but the Queen! Hebes and Floras, and Helens and Graces, are street-walkers to her. She is a statue of beauty, when standing or sitting; grace itself when she moves. She was dressed in silver, scattered over with *laurier-roses*; few diamonds, and feathers, much lower than the Monument. They say she does not dance in time, but then it is wrong to dance in time. Four years ago I thought her like an English Duchess[1], whose name I have forgotten *for some years*. Horrible! but the Queen has had the cestus since. The King's likeness to a Duke, whose name is equally out of my books, remains; and as if there was a fatality that chained the two families together, Madame is as like Lady Georgiana[2] as two peas. As your Ladyship and Lord Ossory cannot be so engrossed with gazing on the Queen as I was, you will want to hear more of the court. I will try what I can remember of it. The new Princess of Piedmont has a glorious face, the rest about the dimensions of the last Lord Holland, which does not do so well in a stiff-bodied gown. Madame Elizabeth[3] is pretty and genteel; Mademoiselle[4] a good figure and dances well. As several of the royal family are

LETTER 1640.—[1] Elizabeth Wrottesley, Duchess of Grafton. See letter to the Earl of Hardwicke of Jan. 12, 1775. Walpole's correspondent, the Countess of Ossory, had been Duchess of Grafton previous to her divorce in 1769.

[2] Lady Georgiana Fitzroy, daughter of Lady Ossory by her former husband.

[3] Elisabeth Philippine Marie Thérèse (1764–1794), younger sister of Louis XVI. She was imprisoned with the King and Queen in the Temple, and perished by the guillotine on May 10, 1794.

[4] Perhaps Louise Adelaïde, daughter of the Prince de Condé; Abbess of Remiremont, 1786; d. 1824.

drapés[5] for the Princess of Conti[6], there were besides, only the King's two brothers, the three elder Mesdames[7], the Princess de Lamballe[8], and the Prince of Condé. Monsieur is very handsome; the Comte d'Artois a better figure and better dancer. The characters approach to those of two other royal dukes.

There were but eight minuets, and, except the Queen and Princesses, only eight lady dancers. I was not so struck with the dancing as I expected, except with a *pas de deux* by the Marquis de Noailles[9] and Madame Holstein. For beauty, I saw none, or the Queen effaced all the rest. After the minuets were French country dances, much encumbered by the long trains, longer tresses, and hoops. As the weather was excessively sultry, I do not think the clothes, though of gauze and the lightest silks, had much taste. In the intervals of dancing, baskets of peaches, China oranges (a little out of season), biscuits, ices, and wine and water, were presented to the royal family and dancers. The ball lasted but just two hours. The monarch did not dance, but for the first two rounds of the minuets even the Queen does not turn her back to him; yet her behaviour is as easy as divine. To-night is a banquet for three hundred persons, given by the Count de Virri, and on Friday he gives a *bal masqué* to the universe in a Colisée erected on purpose. I have excused myself from the first,

[5] A form of court mourning which consisted in draping the carriages of members of the royal family, and those who possessed *les honneurs du Louvre*, with black cloth.

[6] Louise Elisabeth, daughter of the Prince de Condé; m. (1713) Louis Armand de Bourbon, Prince de Conti.

[7] Daughters of Louis XV.

[8] Marie Thérèse Louise de Savoie-Carignan (1748–1792), m. (1767) the Prince de Lamballe (eldest son of the Duc de Penthièvre, whom he predeceased). She was Superintendent of the Queen's Household. She was greatly attached to Marie Antoinette, and shared her captivity in the Temple from Aug.–Sept. 1792. In the latter month the Princess was taken to the prison of La Force, where she was massacred on Sept. 3, 1792.

[9] Emmanuel Marie Louis (1743–1822), Marquis de Noailles, Ambassador in England, 1776.

as I have no curiosity to see how three hundred persons eat, but shall go for a moment to the other *fête*, as nothing but dominos are used, except the grand habit for the dancers. On Saturday is to be acted, in the same great theatre at Versailles, the *Connétable de Bourbon*, a new piece by Monsieur Guibert[10], author of the *Tactique*, graciously indulged to the Queen, and not to be profaned but there and at Fontainebleau, *car cela dérogeroit*; and, besides, his father is a *vieux militaire*, who would not condescend to hear his son's play read, even to the Queen! The Prince de Beauvau is to place me, and there end the spectacles, for Monsieur Turgot is *économe*.

I am rejoiced, for the heat was so great last night, and I traversed so many corridors, that I would not have so much pleasure often for all the world. Thus, Madam, I have given your Ladyship a full account of my travels in this my second life; and you are relieved by my letters from England. I cannot help telling you the French are a little amazed at our sacrificing the substance of America to the sovereignty, for they grow as English in their ideas as we grow French. Well, I will go read our papers, that I may be able to dispute with them.

1641. To the Rev. William Mason.

Paris, Sept. 6, 1775.

I have made very little progress yet towards the account I am to give you of the propagation of the faith in this kingdom. But stay, this is a little too metaphoric; and lest I should be taken for an ex-Jesuit or a spy, I declare, like the writer of an Opera, that I neither believe in the

[10] Jacques Antoine Hippolyte (1743–1790), Comte de Guibert, elected a member of the French Academy in 1786. His father was Charles Bênoit (1715–1786), Comte de Guibert.

gods of old Rome nor new, excepting Vertumnus, Flora, and Pomona, and that I am going to write to you my Provincial, on the conversion of the French to English gardening. I have begun my observation as methodically as if I was to draw up an article for the *Encyclopedia*. I have laid the axe to the root of the tree, for I have begun by visiting M. Watelet's isle, called *le Moulin Joli*. If he has laid the axe to the root, and even to the branches, he has used it nowhere else. Instead of finding, as I expected, a windmill made of ivory and inlaid with false stones; instead of Dryads and Hamadryads gathering acorns in baskets of gauze, M. Watelet has jumped back into nature, when she was not above five hundred years old: in one word, his *island* differs in nothing from a French garden into which no mortal has set his foot for the last century. It is an *ate* (I don't know whether I spell well) joined to his *terra firma* by two bridges, one of which he calls Dutch and the other Chinese, and which are as unlike either as two peas, and which is pierced and divided into straight narrow walks (*en berceau*) and surrounded by a rude path quite round. To give this *étoile* an air *champêtre*, a plenary indulgence has been granted to every nettle, thistle, and bramble *that grew in the garden, 'and they seem good in his sight.'* The receipt is as follows:—take an *ate* full of willows, cram it full of small elms and poplar pines, strip them into cradles, and cut them into paths, and leave all the rest as rough as you found it, and you will have a *Moulin Joli*.

You must know this effort of genius is the more provoking, as the situation is charming. Besides that the isle is in the middle of the Seine, every peephole (though so small that you seem to look through the diminishing end of a spying-glass, besides terminating on one real windmill) is bounded by a château, a *clocher*, a village, a convent,

a villa where Henrietta Maria was educated, or hermitage to which Bossuet retired,—not to mortify himself, but Fénelon. It is true, you catch these points of view over wide fields of chalk, which would produce frankincense as soon as grass, and which (if they had symptoms of verdure) were waving ranks of fennel. I always perceive here, when I am out of Paris; but I never can think myself in the country. I shall next week see some more English Essays.

But they are imitating us in better things: their King is of an excellent disposition, he has driven away the Chancellor, the Duc d'Aiguillon, and those wretches who had given perfection to despotism in the last reign. M. de Maurepas restored the old Parliament, and M. Turgot, the Comptroller-General, has destroyed *corvées*, that most execrable oppression, and is every day planning and attempting acts for public happiness. The *Éloges* of the Academy roll on maxims of virtue and patriotism, and the King publicly applauds them. You may judge whether they do not stare at all we are doing! They will not believe me when I tell them that the American war is *fashionable*, for one is forced to use that word to convey to them an idea of the majority. A great lady asked me the other day if I was not a Bostonian? and I have not met with a single Frenchman who does not express indignation or sneer contempt at all our late Acts of Parliament. M. de Castries being told that Lord North has the Garter, was surprised, and said for what? for having lost America? —Upon these subjects, as I have not a vast deal to say on behalf of my dear country, I choose to shift the conversation to her Grace of Kingston, whose history seems as strange to them as our politics. What a *chef-d'œuvre* is Foote's answer[1]!

Letter 1641.—[1] See *Gent. Mag.* 1775, pp. 390–2.

Sept. 10.

Chap. II.

On Anglo-Franco gardens,

which by the by they call Anglo-Chinois gardens, as they say that by the help of Sir William Chambers's *lunettes* they have detected us for having stolen our gardens from the Chinese. I shall tell them another tale when I publish my last volume. Yesterday I went to see the Countess de Boufflers' English garden at Auteuil, and it is strictly English, and begotten by her on an English gardener. There are fifty-two acres, which ascend from the house up a hill that is laid out in fields, with a sunk fence and loose trees and shrubs, and has tolerable turf, except that it is coarse and of a green seldom worn by a gentleman's garden in England. All along the summit reigns a noble terrace, surrounded by the Bois de Boulogne, into which a *grille* opens upon a lofty avenue bounded by a sugar-loaf hill. The terrace looks over the lawn upon a glorious prospect, which begins from the left with one of the King's houses, is joined by a wood out of which juts Passy, the Duc de Penthièvre's [2], that forms the side-scene and flings a rich view of hills and towns to a great distance. The middle of the landscape advances again; on the foreground are villages and villas, over which is extended all Paris, with the horizon broken by the towers and domes of Notre Dame, St. Sulpice, the Invalides, the Val de Grâce, &c.; the whole height of the semicircle goes off in hills decked with villages and country-houses that are closed by Meudon, and forests on higher hills. In this sumptuous prospect nothing is wanting but verdure and water, of which you do not see a drop. In short, they can never have as beautiful landscapes as ours, till they have as bad a climate.

[2] Louis Jean Marie de Bourbon (1725–1793), Duc de Penthièvre.

I think I shall stay here a month longer. If you send me a line, direct it to Arlington; it will be conveyed or kept for me. Yours ever,

H. W.

1642. To Sir Horace Mann.

Paris, Sept. 7, 1775.

Your letter of Aug. 12th followed me hither from England. I can answer it from hence with less reserve than I should at home. I understand very well, my dear Sir, the propriety of the style in which you write in your ministerial capacity, and never wish to have you expose yourself to any inconvenience by unnecessary frankness. I am too much convinced of your heart and head not swerving from the glorious principles in which we were both educated, to suspect you of having adopted the principles instilled into so many Englishmen by Scotch Jacobites, the authors of the present, as they have been of every, civil war,—since the days of Queen Elizabeth. You will on your side not be surprised that I am what I always was, a zealot for liberty in every part of the globe, and consequently that I most heartily wish success to the Americans. They have hitherto not made *one* blunder; and the administration have made a thousand, besides the two capital ones, of first provoking, and then of uniting the colonies. The latter seem to have as good heads as hearts, as we want both. The campaign seems languishing. The ministers will make all their efforts against the spring. So no doubt will the Americans too. Probably the war will be long. On the side of England, it must be attended with ruin. If England prevails, English and American liberty is at an end! If the colonies prevail, our commerce is gone—and if, at last, we negotiate, they will neither forgive nor give us our former advantages.

The country where I now am is, luckily, neither in a condition or disposition to meddle. If it did, it would complete our destruction, even by only assisting the colonies, which I can scarce think they are blind enough not to do. They openly talk of our tyranny and folly with horror and contempt, and perhaps with amazement, and so does almost every foreign minister here, as well as every Frenchman. Instead of being mortified, as I generally am when my country is depreciated, I am comforted by finding that, though but one of very few in England, the sentiments of the rest of the world concur with and confirm mine. The people with us are fascinated; and what must we be, when Frenchmen are shocked at our despotic acts! Indeed, both this nation and their King seem to embrace the most generous principles—the only fashion, I doubt, in which we shall not imitate them! Too late, our eyes will open!

The Duke and Duchess[1] are at Venice. Nothing ever exceeded the distinctions paid to them in this country. The King even invited them to Paris; but the Duke's haste to be more southerly before the bad weather begins, would not permit him to accept of that honour. They do not expect the same kindness everywhere—and for the English, they have even let the French see what slaves they are, by not paying their duty to the Duke and Duchess. I have written to her, without naming you, to dissuade their fixing at Rome—I fear, in vain. I proposed Sienna to them, as I flatter myself the Emperor's goodness for the Duke would dispose the Great Duke to make it agreeable to them; and their residence there would not commit *you*. Indeed, I do not believe you suspect me of sacrificing you to the interests of my family. On the other hand, I wish you, for your own sake, to take any opportunities of paying your court to them

LETTER 1642.—[1] Of Gloucester. *Walpole.*

indirectly. They are both warm and hurt at the indignities they have received. In our present distracted situation, it is more than possible that the Duke may be a very important personage. I know well that you have had full reason to be dissatisfied with him; I remember it as much as you can: but you are too prudent, as well as too good-natured, not to forgive a young Prince. I own I am in pain about the Duchess. She has all the good qualities of her father[2], but all his impetuosity; and is much too apt to resent affronts, though her virtue and good nature make her as easily reconciled; but her first movements are not discreet. I wish you to please her as much as possible, within your instructions. She has admirable sense, when her passions do not predominate. In one word, her marriage has given me many a pang; and though I never gave into it, I endeavour by every gentle method to prevent her making her situation still worse; and, above all things, I try never to inflame. It is all I can do where I have no ascendant, which, with a good deal of spirit of my own, I cannot expect: however, as I perfectly understand both my parties and myself, I manage pretty well. I know when to stoop, and when to stop; and when I will stoop or will not. I should not be so pliant if they were where they ought to be.

That heroine of Doctors' Commons, about whom you inquire, the Duchess of Kingston, has at last made her folly, which I have long known, as public as her shame, by entering the lists with a Merry-Andrew, but who is no fool. Foote was bringing her on the stage: Lord Hertford[3] prohibited his piece. Drunk with her triumph, she would give the mortal blow with her own hand,—

Pallas te hoc vulnere Pallas immolat;

[2] Sir Edward Walpole. *Walpole.*
[3] Lord Chamberlain. *Walpole.*

but, as the instrument she chose was a *goose*-quill, the stroke recoiled on herself. She wrote a letter in the *Evening Post*, which not the lowest of her class, who tramp in pattens, would have set her mark to. Billingsgate from a ducal coronet was inviting: however, Foote, with all the delicacy she ought to have used, replied only with wit, irony, and confounded satire. The Pope will not be able to wash out the spots with all the holy water in the Tiber. I imagine she will escape a trial; but Foote has given her the *coup de grâce*.

Lord Chatham, when I left England, was in a very low, languishing way; his constitution, I believe, too much exhausted to throw out the gout; and then it falls on his spirits. The last letters speak of his case as not desperate. He might, if allowed—and it was practicable—do much good still. Who else can, I know not. The opposition is weak every way. They have better hearts than the ministers, fewer good heads; not that I am in admiration of the latter. Times may produce men. We must trust to the book of events, if we will flatter ourselves. Make no answer to this; only say you received my letter from Paris, and direct to England. I may stay here a month longer; but it is uncertain.

11th.

P.S. I had made up my letter; but those I received from England last night bring such important intelligence, I must add a paragraph. That miracle of gratitude, the Czarina, has consented to lend England twenty thousand Russians, to be transported to America. The Parliament is to meet on the 20th of next month, and vote twenty-six thousand seamen! What a paragraph of blood is there! With what torrents must liberty be preserved in America! In England, what can save it? Oh, mad, mad England! What frenzy, to throw away its treasures, lay waste its

empire of wealth, and sacrifice its freedom, that its prince may be the arbitrary lord of boundless deserts in America, and of an impoverished, depopulated, and thence insignificant, island in Europe! and what prospect of comfort has a true Englishman? Why, that Philip II miscarried against the boors of Holland, and that Louis XIV could not replace James II on the throne!

1643. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Paris, Sept. 8, 1775.

The delays of the post, and its departure before its arrival, saved me some days of anxiety for Lady Aylesbury, and prevented my telling you how concerned I am for her accident; though I trust, by this time, she has not even pain left. I feel the horror you must have felt during her suffering in the dark, and on the sight of her arm[1]; and though nobody admires her needlework more than I, still I am rejoiced that it will be the greatest sufferer. However, I am very impatient for a further account. Madame du Deffand, who, you know, never loves her friends by halves, and whose impatience never allows itself time to inform itself, was out of her wits, because I could not explain exactly how the accident happened, and where. She wanted to write directly, though the post was just gone; and, as soon as I could make her easy about the accident, she fell into a new distress about her fans for Madame de Marchais, and concludes they have been overturned, and broken too. In short, I never saw anything like her. She has made engagements for me till Monday se'nnight, in which are included I don't know how many journeys into the country; and as nobody ever leaves her without engaging them for

Letter 1643.—[1] Lady Ailesbury had been overturned in her carriage at Park Place, and dislocated her wrist. *Walpole.*

another time, all these parties will be so many polypuses, that will shoot out into new ones every way. Madame de Jonsac[2], a great friend of mine, arrived the day before yesterday, and Madame du Deffand has pinned her down to meeting me at her house four times before next Tuesday, all parentheses, that are not to interfere with our other suppers; and from those suppers I never get to bed before two or three o'clock. In short, I need have the activity of a squirrel, and the strength of a Hercules, to go through my labours—not to count how many *démêlés* I have had to *raccommode*, and how many *mémoires* to present against Tonton[3], who grows the greater favourite the more people he devours. As I am the only person who dare correct him, I have already insisted on his being confined in the Bastile every day after five o'clock. T'other night he flew at Lady Barrymore's face, and I thought would have torn her eye out; but it ended in biting her finger. She was terrified; she fell into tears. Madame du Deffand, who has too much parts not to see everything in its true light, perceiving that she had not beaten Tonton half enough, immediately told us a story of a lady, whose dog having bitten a piece out of a gentleman's leg, the tender dame, in a great fright, cried out, 'Won't it make my dog sick?'

Lady Barrymore has taken a house. She will be glutted with conquests: I never saw anybody so much admired. I doubt her poor little head will be quite overset.

Madame de Marchais is charming: eloquence and attention itself. I cannot stir for peaches, nectarines, grapes, and Bury pears. You would think Pomona was in love with me. I am not so transported with N—— cock and hen. They are a tabor and pipe that I do not understand. He mouths and she squeaks, and neither articulates. M. d'Entragues I have

[2] The Comtesse de Jonsac, a niece of the Président Hénault.

[3] A favourite dog of Madame du Deffand's. *Walpole.*

not seen. Upon the whole I am much more pleased with Paris than ever I was; and perhaps shall stay a little longer than I intended. The Harry Grenvilles[4] are arrived. I dined with them at Madame de Viry's, who has completed the conquest of France by her behaviour on Madame Clotilde's wedding, and by the *fêtes* she gave. Of other English I wot not, but grieve the Richmonds do not come.

I am charmed with Dr. Bally; nay, and with the King of Prussia—as much as I can be with a northern monarch. For your Kragen, I think we ought to procure a female one, and marry it to Ireland, that we may breed some new islands against we have lost America. I know nothing of said America. There is not a Frenchman that does not think us distracted.

I used to scold you about your bad writing, and perceive I have written in such a hurry, and blotted my letter so much, that you will not be able to read it: but consider how few moments I have to myself. I am forced to stuff my ears with cotton to get any sleep.—However, my journey has done me good. I have thrown off at least fifteen years. Here is a letter for my dear Mrs. Damer from Madame de Cambis, who thinks she dotes on you all. Adieu!

P.S. I shall bring you two *Éloges* of Marshal Catinat; not because I admire them, but because I admire him, because I think him very like you.

1644. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Avez-vous lu les deux Éloges? Ah! mon Dieu, le petit Cossé est mort; c'est une désolation! Monsieur de Clermont qui vient de perdre sa femme!—eh bien, Madame! et Mon-

[4] Henry Grenville, brother to the first Earl Temple. He married Miss Margaret Banks, a celebrated beauty. *Walpole.*

sieur Chamboneau qui doit reprendre la sienne—mais c'est affreux. Apropos, on dit qu'on vient de nommer deux dames à Madame Elizabeth! si je le sçais! bon; ne voilà-t-il pas que je viens de me faire écrire chez Madame de Roncherolles! soupez-vous par hasard chez Madame de la Reinière[1]?

This is the quintessence, Madam, of the present state of Paris, Sept. 9th, 1775, a quarter before twelve in the forenoon; and if you receive my letter within a week, you may boast of having the freshest and most fashionable intelligence of what was said last night at half an hour after eight in one of the first houses in this capital: not that your Ladyship has much claim on my punctuality: I have been here three weeks this blessed day, and you have taken no more notice of me than if I was in Siberia, and were gone out of fashion instead of in. Remember I am out of your jurisdiction, Madam; and that *mon cœur* is assailed like *Cithère assiégée*, the subject of the present Opera. Lord! how I could brag if I would! Madame de B.[2] told me last night that I had made the *conquête* of her daughter-in-law, la Comtesse Emilie; I am going to drink tea with her under a *bosquet de plumes* this evening, in the mother's English garden at Auteuil, and I am to sup at St. Ouen with Madame Necker[3], who is reckoned to have condescended more towards me than to any *bel esprit* or *philosophe* since the days of David Hume. It is true I have hurt myself by speaking a little irreverently of Monsieur Thomas, and by laughing when she told me that Bossuet and the writers under Louis Quatorze had only opened the channels of eloquence which the authors of the present age have made into a perfect bason—but I am always kicking down the pail of my fortune by some indiscretion or other! Well!

Letter 1644.—[1] *Née* Jarente, wife of M. de la Reynière, a rich financier. Her suppers were celebrated.

[2] Madame de Boufflers.

[3] *Née* Suzanne Curchod; wife of the financier Jacques Necker; d. 1794.

they are a charming people, and I cannot think of leaving them yet. In England I fancied I was within a furlong of threescore; but it is so English to grow old! The French are Strulbrugs improved. After ninety they have no more caducity or distempers, but set out on a new career. Madame du Deffand and I set out last Sunday at seven in the evening, to go fifteen miles to a ball, and came back after supper; and another night, because it was but one in the morning when she brought me home, she ordered the coachman to make the tour of the Quais, and drive gently because it was so early.

Do you think, Madam, I will come home and have the gout, when I feel myself as young as Nestor when he had just tapped his second century? These good folks push the delusion of life to the last moment. A gentleman here was dying; his wife sent for the notary to make his will; and when it was done, lest the poor man should have a codicil more of affection to make, they supped by his bedside. The notary, *tout plein d'attentions*, filled a bumper and said, 'Madame, à la santé de notre aimable agonisant.'

Pray tell Lord Ossory, Madam, that he would not know Paris, it is so improved in buildings and in good architecture. The Hôtel de la Monnaie on the Quai is very handsome. The École Militaire would be beautiful if the columns were not as short as they are long. I have not yet had time to see the École de Chirurgie, which they say is beautiful, nor the Portail de Ste. Geneviève, nor the Hôtel du Châtelet, nor the Petite Maison of the Princess of Monaco, but shall next week. There are twenty new streets that are lovely, with arcades and gardens. Mad. de Mirepoix's house, where I supped last night, is charming. It is on the old Boulevard, the trees of which shade the windows, with the perspective of a street in front. The *salle à manger* is all of stucco, highly polished, representing white marble, with panels of

verd antique. The grand cabinet is round, all white and gold and glasses, with curtains in festoons of silk *flambé*, and illuminated by four branches of lilies of *or moulu*, each as loose and graceful as that which Guido's angel holds in the Salutation at the Carmelites, which, alas! they have just repainted, as they are serving the whole cloister at the Chartreuse. While we were at supper, with all the windows open, and *les Gardes du Roi* playing to us, your Ladyship, I suppose, was hovering over a fire. It has been sultry ever since I came hither; the last five days like the torrid zone, and lightning as cheap as gunpowder.

We are expecting Mr. Crawfurd; pray don't send for him to Parliament. In England I conclude you are still talking of Mrs. Rudd and Miss Butterfield[4], and of the Duchess of Rudd and Butterfield[5]. Well, you may tell me what news you have; I will pretend to care about it, as one does about *les nouvelles de province.* I am very insolent, Madam, but at bottom there is a little resentment at not having heard from you.

1645. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Paris, Sept. 12, 1775.

So they say it was I, Madam, who made your Ladyship entertain a passion for Lord Ossory! Upon my word, I never suspected before that I was the god of love! nor can I now discover any resemblance between us, unless Le Sage was right when he made the devil *upon two sticks* acknowledge himself for Cupid.

However, as the deed was a good one, and made two persons happier than Venus's son generally does, I am well content to take it upon myself: yet not proposing to be so

[4] Jane Butterfield, tried on a charge of murder in the preceding August, and acquitted.

[5] The Duchess of Kingston.

convenient again, I will resign Asmodeo's hop to anybody that likes the profession.

What was in the letter that diverted Lord Ossory, I remember no more than the man in the moon, whose memory lasts but a month. I know, though you are so overbenign to them, Madam, that I grow easier about my letters; since they have become so numerous, they must have the fate of a collection that was found last winter at Monsieur de Pondeveylle's: there were sixteen thousand from one lady, in a correspondence of only eleven years. For fear of setting the house on fire if thrown into the chimney, the executors crammed them into the oven. There have been known here persons who wrote to one another four times a day; and I was told of one couple, who being always together, and the lover being fond of writing, he placed a screen between them, and then wrote to Madame on t'other side, and flung them over.

You perceive I had not received your Ladyship's when I sent one away yesterday, nor knew you had been dancing a dream with the Duke of Monmouth, who, when he lost his head, never dreamt you would replace it with his cousin's, whose head I am sure I never recommended or commended to anybody.

Sept. 16[1].

I was interrupted, Madam, t'other day, and have not had a moment since to finish my answer, for, as I never come home till morning, I do not rise till evening. Mr. Crawfurd is arrived, *though* he did promise to come—to make amends, he has not kept one engagement since. On his way, he went to visit the Châtelets, but in a province where they do not live; he has changed his lodgings already, and does not like that which he has got. When he came to Brussels, Sir Something Gordon, our minister, had just shot out both

LETTER 1645.—[1] Hitherto printed as a separate letter.

eyes of the Duc d'Aremberg's son, but letters since say he will recover one of them.

Pray assure the Duchess of Marlborough, Madam, that I am much flattered by her Grace's invitation, and shall certainly obey it. I shall not have an opportunity quite so soon as I intended, having promised to stay here till the 10th of next month—a promise I already repent, as the weather, with English inconstancy, has changed at once from sultry to extreme cold and deluges of rain.

The charming Queen is gone out of fashion, so I am no longer in love with her. However, as I have not seen another face that is handsomer than a mermaid's at the stern of a ship, my heart is still vacant—in France; and you may have it again, Madam, if you are not still dreaming of the Duke of Monmouth, or any of King Charles's breed. If you saw how like this King is to one of them, and what horrid grimaces he makes, I am sure *all my power of description* would not reconcile you to him. Monsieur is very handsome—but somehow or other, I doubt, nobody will fall in love with him. The Comte d'Artois is not so comely, is better made, and having revived the house of Bourbon, is taking true pains to reconcile the ladies to the family. The Duke of Orléans, as they have no longer occasion for his being king, is in a bad way. Madame de Boufflers told us *at supper* t'other night *qu'à sa garderobe il s'étoit passé de la graisse.* I never heard of such a complaint before, and was very glad it was the only one that poor Crawfurd, who was present, cannot fancy he has.

Lady Anne's comparison of her father to Maître Corbeau put me in mind of a very good story, though so old I fear you know it, of a little girl who had confounded her prayers and La Fontaine, and being ordered to repeat the Lord's Prayer in French, began, 'Notre père sur un arbre perché.' If this is antiquated, I have nothing else newer—except that

I am violently tempted to stay for Mariette's sale, which they say is to be in November. I have not heard a syllable of news from England since I came hither, my few correspondents being in the country, like your Ladyship.

Thank my stars, you cannot commend this letter, Madam: I hope it is dull enough to pass with impunity. I should have a fine time of it if I tortured myself to keep up a character! but nobody shall ever catch me at that.

21st.

Lord Duncannon[2] is not gone! my letter has lain by till it is mouldy, but as I have an opportunity of sending it to-morrow, and no time to write another, it must go, superannuated as it is!

1646. To George Augustus Selwyn.

Paris, Sept. 16, 1775.

Mr. Brodrick[1] brought me your letter yesterday, and I told him, as you may be sure, how glad I shall be to be of any use to him. I shall be of little, I believe, as his object is to see things, not persons.

Madame du Deffand would have been more pleased with your message, which I delivered immediately, if she had had greater faith in it: yet, when Crawfurd and I come so often, how can she doubt her power of attraction? If possible, she is more worth visiting than ever: and so far am I from being ashamed of coming hither at my age, that I look on myself as wiser than one of the Magi, when I travel to adore this star in the East. The star and I went to the Opera last night, and when we came from Madame

[2] Frederick Ponsonby (1758–1844), Lord Duncannon, eldest son of second Earl of Besborough, whom he succeeded in 1793.

Letter 1646.—Collated with copy of original in possession of Mr. E. S. Roscoe.

[1] Probably a son of the third Viscount Midleton, who married George Selwyn's niece, Albinia Townshend.

de la Vallière's, at one in the morning, it wanted to drive about the town, because it was too early to *set.* To be sure, you and I have dedicated our decline to very different occupations. You nurse a little girl[2] of four years old, and I rake with an old woman of fourscore! *N'importe*; we know many sages that take great pains to pass their time with less satisfaction.

We have both one capital mortification; have not you? That a great-grand-daughter of Madame de Sévigné pretends, for it is not certain, that she has been debauched by ancient Richelieu, and half the world thinks that she is more guilty of forgery. The memoirs of the two parties are half as voluminous as Monsieur de Guines', and more are to appear.

You shall have some royal prints. New fashions in dress, furniture, baubles, I have seen none. Feathers are waning, and almost confined to *filles* and foreigners. I found out an Englishwoman at the Opera last night by her being covered with plumes and no rouge, which made her look like a whore in a salivation; so well our countrywomen contrive to display their virtue!

I do not tell you about Mons. Turgot's regulations and reformations, because you care no more about their *patrie* than your own; but you shall hear a *bon mot* of Madame du Deffand. Mons. Turgot has begun several reforms and retracted them: she said, 'Dans le bon vieux tems on reculoit pour mieux sauter, au lieu que Mons. Turgot saute pour mieux reculer.'

Of the house of Harrington I know as much as you do. Lady Barrymore is here, and my Lord and Lady Harriet are coming: the first is excessively admired. Lady Mary Coke, Harry Grenville and his wife, Crawfurd, Lord Coleraine[3], and Lord Duncannon are here: the latter will carry

[2] Maria Fagniani, subsequently mentioned as 'Mimy.'

[3] John Hanger (1743–1794), second Baron Coleraine.

this letter. There are many other English; but I did not come hither to get acquaintance of that sort. Madame du Deffand has recruited her vacancies, and given me enough new French. With one of them you would be delighted, a Madame de Marchais. She is not perfectly young, has a face like a Jew pedlar, her person is about four feet, her head about six, and her *coiffure* about ten. Her forehead, chin, and neck are whiter than a miller's; and she wears more festoons of natural flowers than all the *figurantes* at the Opera. Her eloquence is still more abundant, her *attentions* exuberant. She talks volumes, writes folios—I mean in *billets*; presides over the *Académie*, inspires passions, and has not time enough to heal a quarter of the wounds she gives. She has a house in a nut-shell, that is fuller of inventions than a fairy tale; her bed stands in the middle of the room, because there is no other space that would hold it; and is surrounded by such a perspective of looking-glasses, that you may see all that passes in it from the first antechamber. But you will see her if you come in spring, which you will not do unless you bring Mimy and Raton, and one or two of Lord Carlisle's children[4]; and that you will be afraid of doing, for Madame du Deffand has got a favourite dog that will bite all their noses off, and was very near tearing out one of Lady Barrymore's eyes t'other night. Adieu! I shall see you by the middle of October.

21st. Duncannon is not gone, but I can send my letter to-morrow, and shall.

1647. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Paris, Oct. 3, 1775.

You may be cutting down palm-branches, Madam, to strew the way, for I am coming. The tempter took me up

[4] Selwyn was much attached to the Earl of Carlisle and his family.

into a mountain, and showed me all Mariette's collection of prints and drawings, which are to be sold in November, and offered me my choice of them if I would stay. I resisted, and prefer myself infinitely to Scipio: he might have had fifty other women; but where is there another room full of Raphaels, Correggios, Parmegianos, and Michael Angelos? Besides, virtue was the *bon ton* in all the *ruelles* in Rome, and it was not *sçavoir vivre* to feel like a man: my continence is unique; who else curbs any passion or withstands any temptation? Did not three monarchs jump at Poland the moment the devil gave them a glimpse of it? Did I learn self-denial *chez nous*? but I will be just, and own that perhaps I have been infected here. *C'est le règne de la vertu*; and I am flying, lest I should be thought Frenchified, if I return with any principles. Messieurs de Turgot and Malesherbes[1] are every day framing plans for mitigating monarchy and relieving the people; and the King not only listens to but encourages them. Their *philosophes* tell folks that the age is enlightened; but don't repeat this, Madam; I should be laughed at in England, where we are wiser, and have adopted all the notions which the French are so silly as to relinquish.

However, things do not seem fixed here; there are two parties, if either of which prevailed, Dame Vertu would return to her rags. The charming Queen is eager to reinstate Mons. de Choiseul, and then Madame Gloire would blaze out in full *éclat*. If Monsieur and Madame (the latter a very artful Italian[2]) get the ascendant, then the Princess de Marsan (Monsieur's governess) would bring back the Jesuits, persecution, the Church, and the devil knows what—

LETTER 1647.—[1] Chrétien Guillaume de Lamoignon de Malesherbes (1721–1794); Ministre de la Maison du Roi, 1775–76. He was again minister in 1787, but resigned in 1788, and lived in retirement until 1792, when he undertook the defence of Louis XVI at his trial before the Convention. He was guillotined in April 1794.

[2] She was of the house of Savoy.

everything but a Madame du Barri, who must wait for the reign of the Comte d'Artois, till when there will be no naughty doings in this country.

I am going to-night to the Italian comedy with Madame de Mirepoix, to see a new piece, called *La Réduction de Paris.* I have no idea what it is to be, but shall have time to tell you before I finish my letter. My dear old woman has been dangerously ill, which has confined me above ten days. I carried her yesterday to the new Boulevard to take the air for the first time, and with much difficulty have persuaded her not to sup in the country to-night.

Poor Mr. Crawfurd is laid up with the gout, but will not be so long, for in spite of all my wisdom he has sent for a fashionable empiric, who has clapped a plaster to his foot and removed the pain in one night. He consulted an old Duc de Brancas, who was a cripple, and assured him he could already dance a minuet. As I do not want to dance one, I shall not have recourse to the quack, though he should not kill Crawfurd. In truth he is, and always will be, so unhappy a being, that if I did not love him as much as I do, I should scarce think it kind to dissuade him from anything; but he has so much real worth, and so much good sense, that I preach to him by the hour, though I expect no fruit from my sermons. Madame du Deffand says one can be but what one is born: a great affront to me, who pretend to have improved myself exceedingly. She obeys her thesis so well, that she still says and does everything that comes into her head; and though I have lectured her black and blue about whispering to me in company, it is but two nights ago that she whispered the Bishop of Mirepoix, thinking it was I that sat next to her, about a lady in company, who was sitting over against her, and saw the mistake. You will not believe it perhaps, Madam, but here I am thought a miracle of prudence and discretion. Yes,

you will; for I recollect your Ladyship sometimes upbraids me with those qualities. If I have them, I am sure I am not what I was born; but evil communication corrects *bad* manners.

Now I am quoting holy writ, I will tell you a story from Madame du Deffand. A worthy old gentleman, who was ill, made his footman read the Bible to him. Unluckily the man could not read, at least not well. The first sentence he uttered was, 'Dieu apparut à Abimelech en singe.'—'Comment donc, butor! que lis-tu là?'—'Mais, Monsieur, je dis que Dieu apparut à Abimelech en singe.'—'Dieu apparut en singe!'—'Eh bien! Oui, Monsieur, est-ce que Dieu ne peut pas prendre telle forme qu'il lui plaît?' Pray, Madam, make Lady Anne observe, how true piety drew edification from the mouth of the poor footman.

I have another very moral tale for Lady Anne, but it is too long for a letter. I hope to find her in danger of a brother. You know I am so angry at her sister, that I don't even know her name, and regard her as a footman did here, who being sent to inquire after a lady that was brought to bed, and being asked at his return what the child was, said, 'Je ne sçais pas; je sçais que ce n'est pas un garçon.'

P.S. Huge news!—yet not quite ripe. Monsieur de Choiseul is come suddenly to Paris. They say he goes back on Saturday, but his friends look in great spirits; and as the Queen has lately committed some acts of authority, and as Madame de Marsan has retired without a pension, the family-compact—But perhaps your Ladyship had rather hear about *La Réduction de Paris.* It is a comic opera, and yet as dismal as *George Barnwell.* Henry IV does nothing but utter maxims and sentences: in the first scene arrives a dame with a helmet on, a spear and shield,

and one leg bare. I concluded it was Joan of Arc, but it proved to be a Dame de Châtillon, who sings a catch to persuade his Majesty to put every living soul to the sword, as *le brave* La Noue does another about *la loi fondamentale*. In short, the nation has jumbled itself into such a hodge-podge of philosophy, which they set to music, and of eloquence, which they dress with all sauces, that their productions are monsters of pedantry. I have not met with a page that is worth bringing you. The Academy of Marseilles have given for their next subject the *Éloge* of Madame de Sévigné. How the good soul would stare if she knew it! Adieu, Madam, and adieu, Paris!

1648. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Paris, Oct. 6, 1775.

It will look like a month since I wrote to you; but I have been coming, and am. Madame du Deffand has been so ill, that the day she was seized I thought she would not live till night. Her herculean weakness, which could not resist strawberries and cream after supper, has surmounted all the *ups* and *downs* which followed her excess; but her impatience to go everywhere and to do everything has been attended with a kind of relapse, and another kind of giddiness; so that I am not quite easy about her, as they allow her to take no nourishment to recruit, and she will die of inanition, if she does not live upon it. She cannot lift her head from the pillow without *étourdissemens*; and yet her spirits gallop faster than anybody's, and so do her repartees. She has a great supper to-night for the Duc de Choiseul, and was in such a passion yesterday with her cook about it, and that put Tonton into such a rage, that *nos dames de Saint-Joseph* thought the devil or the philosophers were flying away with their convent!

As I have scarce quitted her, I can have had nothing to tell you. If she gets well, as I trust, I shall set out on the 12th; but I cannot leave her in any danger—though I shall run many myself, if I stay longer. I have kept such bad hours with this *malade*, that I have had alarms of gout; and bad weather, worse inns, and a voyage in winter, will ill suit me. The fans arrived at a propitious moment, and she immediately had them opened on her bed, and felt all the patterns, and had all the papers described. She was all satisfaction and thanks, and swore me to do her full justice to Lady Aylesbury and Mrs. Damer. Lord Harrington and Lady Harriet are arrived; but have announced and persisted in a strict invisibility.

I know nothing of my *chère patrie*, but what I learn from the *London Chronicle*; and that tells me, that the trading towns are suing out *lettres de noblesse*, that is, entreating the King to put an end to commerce, that they may all be gentlemen. Here agriculture, economy, reformation, philosophy, are the *bon ton* even at court. The two nations seem to have crossed over and figured in; but as people that copy take the bad with the good, as well as the good with the bad, there was two days ago a great horse-race in the Plain de Sablon, between the Comte d'Artois, the Duc de Chartres, Monsieur de Conflans, and the Duc de Lauzun. The latter won by the address of a little English postillion, who is in such fashion that I don't know whether the Academy will not give him for the subject of an *éloge*.

The Duc de Choiseul, I said, is here; and, as he has a second time put off his departure, *cela fait beaucoup de bruit*. I shall not be at all surprised if he resumes the reins, as (forgive me a pun) he has the *Reine* already. Messrs. de Turgot and Malesherbes certainly totter—but I shall tell you no more till I see you; for though this

goes by a private hand, it is so private, that I don't know it, being an English merchant's, who lodges in this hotel, and whom I do not know by sight: so, perhaps, I may bring you word of this letter myself. I flatter myself Lady Aylesbury's arm has recovered its straightness and its cunning.

Madame du Deffand says I love you better than anything in the world. If true, I hope you have not less penetration: if you have not, or it is not true, what would professions avail?—So I leave that matter in suspense. Adieu!

Oct. 7.

Madame du Deffand was quite well yesterday; and at near one this morning I left the Duc de Choiseul, the Duchesse de Grammont, the Prince and Princess of Beauvau, Princess of Poix[1], the Maréchale de Luxembourg, Duchesse de Lauzun, Ducs de Gontaut[2] et de Chabot[3], and Caraccioli, round her *chaise longue*; and she herself was not a dumb personage. I have not heard yet how she has slept, and must send away my letter this moment, as I must dress to go to dinner with Monsieur de Malesherbes at Madame de Villegagnon's. I must repose a great while after all this living in company; nay, intend to go very little into the world again, as I do not admire the French way of burning one's candle to the very snuff in public. Tell Mrs. Damer that the fashion now is to erect the *toupée* into a high detached tuft of hair, like a cockatoo's crest; and this *toupée* they call *la physionomie*—I don't guess why.

LETTER 1648. — [1] Anne Louise Marie de Beauvau, daughter of the Prince de Craon; m. (1767) Philippe Louis Marie Antoine de Noailles, Prince de Poix, son of the Maréchal de Noailles.

[2] Charles Antoine Armand de Gontaut, Duc de Gontaut, Lieutenant-General and Governor of Languedoc.

[3] Probably Louis Marie Bretagne Dominique de Rohan-Chabot (1710–1801), Duc de Rohan.

My *laquais* is come back from St. Joseph's, and says Marie de Vichy[4] has had a very good night, and is quite well.—Philip[5]! let my chaise be ready on Thursday.

1649. To Sir Horace Mann.

Paris, Oct. 10, 1775.

I am still here, though on the wing. Your answer to mine from hence was sent back to me from England; as I have loitered here beyond my intention; in truth, from an indisposition of mind. I am not impatient to be in a frantic country, that is stabbing itself in every vein. The delirium still lasts; though, I believe, kept up by the quacks that caused it. Is it credible that five or six of the great *trading* towns have presented addresses against the Americans? I have no doubt but those addresses are procured by those boobies the country gentlemen, their members, and bought of the aldermen; but is it not amazing that the merchants and manufacturers do not duck such tools in a horse-pond? When the storm will recoil I do not know, but it will be terrible in all probability, though too late. Never shall we be again what we have been! Other powers, who sit still, and wisely suffer us to plunge over head and ears, will perhaps be alarmed at what they write from England, that we are to buy twenty thousand Russian assassins, at the price of Georgia: how deep must be our game, when we pursue it at the expense of establishing a new maritime power, and aggrandize that engrossing throne, which threatens half Europe, for the satisfaction of enslaving our own brethren! Horrible policy! If the Americans, as our papers say, are on the point of seizing Canada, I should think that France would not long remain

[4] The maiden name of Madame du Deffand. *Walpole.*

[5] Mr. Walpole's *valet de chambre.* *Walpole.*

neuter, when she may regain her fur trade with the Canadians, or obtain Canada from the Americans: but it is endless to calculate what we may lose. Our court has staked everything against despotism; and the nation, which must be a loser, whichever side prevails, takes part against the Americans, who fight for the nation as well as for themselves! What Egyptian darkness!

This country is far more happy. It is governed by benevolent and beneficent men, under a prince who has not yet betrayed a fault, and who will be as happy as his people if he always employs such men. Messieurs de Turgot and Malesherbes are philosophers in the true sense, that is, legislators; but, as their plans tend to serve the public, you may be sure they do not please interested individuals. The French, too, are light and fickle; and designing men, who have no weapon against good men but ridicule, already employ it to make a trifling nation laugh at its benefactors: and, if it is the fashion to laugh, the laws of fashion will be executed preferably to those of common sense.

There is a great place just vacant. The Maréchal de Muy, Secrétaire d'État pour la Guerre, died yesterday, having been cut the day before for the stone. The operation lasted thirty-five ages, that is, minutes!

Our Parliament meets on the 26th, and I suppose will act as infamously as it did last year. It cannot do worse,—scarce so ill, for now it cannot act inconsiderately. To joke in voting a civil war is the *comble* of infamy. I hope it will present flattering addresses on our disgraces, and heap taxes on those who admire the necessity of them. If the present generation alone would be punished by inviting the yoke, it were pity but it were already on their necks! Do not wonder at my indignation, nor at my indulging it. I can write freely hence—from England, where I may

find the Inquisition, it would not be so prudent; but judge of our situation, when an Englishman, to speak his mind, must come to France! and hither I will come unless the times alter. I had rather live where a Maupeou[1] is banished, than where he is Chief Justice[2].

I know nothing of their Royal Highnesses[3], nor have heard of them since they were at Strasburg. I wrote twice to Venice; and if they think me in England, and have written thither, I should have received the letter, as I did yours, unless it is stopped. I can give you no advice, but to act prudently and decently, as you always do. If you receive orders, you must obey them. If you do not, you may show disposition; and yet I would not go too far. Even under orders, you may intimate concern; but I would express nothing in writing. My warmth may hurt myself, but never shall make me forget the interest of my friends. Adieu!

1650. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, Oct. 17, 1775.

PRINCESS, in spite of fortune, fate, and chance,
I'm once again return'd to you from France.

I will not maintain, Madam, that this couplet is absolutely stolen out of any French play, but it is so like the *début* of many of their tragedies, that I think it could not have come into my head if I had not remembered it. Whether it is Racine's or not, it suits my purpose so exactly, that I could not help employing it, and I beg your Ladyship will believe the sentiment sincere, though couched in poetry. I will not quote Virgil for the circumstance of

LETTER 1649. — [1] Chancellor of France. *Walpole.*
[2] Alluding to Lord Mansfield. *Walpole.*
[3] The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester. *Walpole.*

my journey, for I was much more *terris jactatus* than *alto*; the roads were very rough, but the sea so smooth that it cost fifteen hours to pass from Calais to Dover, what wind there was being perfectly neuter. However, here I am, and as my motto says, ever yours, &c.

P.S. My letter concluded so happily, that though professional and civil conclusions are totally out of fashion, I could not help ending there; but to take off the formality, I add a few words; and to tell you I have bought your two bobbins and a bit of china; no, it is not come, but I hope will, and will be a great rarity: for to my sorrow I did not know that last year's Act, to favour the Bristol manufacturer, laid a duty of one hundred and fifty per cent. on French china, and I paid at Dover seven guineas and a half for a common set of coffee things that had cost me but five. As I came but this morning, I have not time to add more, though I would not let the newspaper have the pleasure of telling you that I was arrived.

P.S. I left poor Mr. Crawfurd flayed alive, that is, his foot—I never saw so horrid a sight. The quack brought off the whole coat of his foot at once, and it looks like a leg anatomized and thrown on a dunghill; yet the man had made him walk a mile on it the day before I set out. My Lord Lovat might as well have put on a cravat after his head was off.

1651. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 21, 1775.

I could tell you, Madam, when the moon will change, but not when Mr. Crawfurd will set out. Poor soul! I do not guess when he will be able; but, perhaps, he will

attempt it for variety. However, pray write to him; it will be kind, and direct it to Mr. Panchaud. If your letter misses him, there will be no great harm, as I suppose you will not tell him any great secrets.

For my visiting Ampthill just now, it is totally impossible. I have run strangely in debt to my own business, and find my hands full. I had left a purchase or two here unfinished. My poor sister, Mrs. Daye, is dead, and I have her affairs to settle. General Cholmondeley has made me one of his executors, and though I shall give up that charge, I must give it up, and must go to town to-morrow upon it. I have commissions from France to execute; and, in short, have such a jumble of two nations in my head, that I want a few days of entire repose, before I shall get into my common sense again. Besides, come to Ampthill! Why is not your Ladyship coming to town? I will not deliver a bobbin but in Seymour Place, nor make a visit farther out of town.

1652. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, Oct. 23, 1775.

This will be delivered to you by Mr. Pars[1], a painter, who is going to improve himself in Italy. He has already great merit, and has done several things for me, particularly washed drawings of Strawberry, of which he can talk to you very perfectly. This was his style originally. He executed an excellent volume full of them for Lord Palmerston[2], one of the Lords of the Admiralty, his protector. He has since taken to oil and portraits. Pray assist him as much as you can, particularly by strong recommendations

Letter 1652.—[1] Mr. Pars died at Rome in 1782. *Walpole.*

[2] Henry Temple, Viscount Palmerston. Mr. Pars had been in Switzerland with his Lordship to take views. *Walpole.*

to Rome and Cardinal Albani[3]. Pray, too, make him do a view of Fiesole for me. He is very modest, sensible, and intelligent, and not mad, or I would not recommend him so strongly. I give him a letter to Sir William Hamilton.

1653. To the Rev. William Mason.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 25, 1775.

I am returned to my own Lares and Penates—to my dogs and cats; and was not a little edified by my journey. I saw a King who accords everything that is asked for the good of his people, and I saw two ministers, Messieurs de Malesherbes and Turgot, who do not let their master's benevolent disposition rust. The latter is attempting to take off *corvées*, that quintessence of cruel and ostentatious despotism, but the *country gentlemen*, that race of interested stupidity, will baffle him. Monsieur de Malesherbes, in the most simple and unaffected manner, gave me an account of his visitation of the Bastile, whence he released the prisoners, half of whom were mad with their misfortunes, and many of whom he could not find even the causes of their commitment. One man refused his liberty: he said he had been prisoner fifteen years, and had nothing in the world left; that the King lodged and fed him, and he would not quit the Bastille unless they would give him half his pension. M. de Malesherbes reported it to the King, who replied, 'C'est juste,' and the man has fifteen hundred livres a year and his freedom. This excellent magistrate, who made my tears run down my cheeks, added that what the prisoners complained of most was the want of pen and ink. He ordered it. The demons remonstrated and said the

[3] Cardinal Alexander Albani, youngest nephew of Clement XI and a great lover of *virtù*. He was also a friend to England. *Walpole.*

prisoners would only make use of the pen to write memorials against the ministers; he replied, 'Tant mieux.' He is going to erect a court of six masters of request to examine the petitions of those who demand *lettres de cachet* for their relations. Under the late Duc de la Vrillière, his mistress, Madame Sabatin, had a bureau of printed *lettres de cachet* with blanks, which she sold for twenty-five louis apiece. When a great Scotch judge was last in France, at the restoration of the old Parliament, he said, 'If the ministers mean the good of the people, they are doing right, but if they regard the prerogative of the crown, very wrong.' What a diabolical But! Do not imagine these ministers will hold their places long; they will soon be epigrammatized out of them. The first event since my return, after hearing of this gaol-delivery, is Mr. Sayer[1] being sent to the Bastille; but it is not the prisoners in this country that are mad, but the ministers. They have committed him for designing to steal the Tower and the King, he and one more; and I suppose send them to New York; not to Halifax, for that is gone, and Quebec too, and Boston by this time. So now we know what we have to do; only retake all America, which is very easy, from three hundred thousand cowards.

26th, Arlington Street.

I had written thus far last night, as you perceive, and find your letter on my return, for which I would thank you more if you did not say such fine things to me. Pray never do any more; I have no talent, nor anything else but taste for those who have, and that taste is almost a sinecure. If I had time I could increase your 'Kingstoniana' with still better stories, but she is not worth one's while. I have

LETTER 1653.—[1] A banker of bad credit, arrested on a charge of high treason on the oath of an American officer named Richardson. The latter swore that Sayer had offered him fifteen hundred pounds to assist him in seizing the Tower and the King's person.

but just a moment to ask if there is any chance of seeing you this winter, which would be a great comfort, and I am not young enough to put off my pleasures. Adieu!

Pray did you pay Mr. Peckitt? Tell me that I may pay you or him.

1654. To the Rev. William Mason.

Arlington Street, Oct. 27, 1775.

I was at Strawberry Hill when your letter arrived, and could not thank you for it so early as I should have done if I had received it sooner. If my description of the *Moulin Joli* pleased you, it was from the circumstances of the place, for I neither describe well nor recount well, nor have any original talent. I pretend to nothing but taste for talents, and that taste is almost a sinecure. I am returned because I wanted to be *at home*; not that I was particularly charmed with France, or impatient to be in England; but when one is old and has no particular business anywhere, methinks one is *déplacé* anywhere but *chez soi*. The *Amor patriae* burns in me no fiercer than love for my wife would, if I had one and she proved a shrew. I love the free constitution of England more than the acres, and should wish better to California if it had the better form of government; not but I can feel the pride of patriotism when my country is worth being proud of: when it sinks by its own folly, I content myself with my citizenship of the world, and pray for that part that is most reasonable.

I could improve your 'Kingstoniana' if I had leisure; the subject in truth is little worth it, but as superlative in its kind. My chief business with you is to know if I am likely to see you this winter. My pleasures grow dear to me because I have no long time to enjoy them, and cannot live on hopes. Though I still live in the world, most of

my hours are passed alone, because they are not passed with the few I love, and all the rest are perfectly indifferent to me. Old people are thought to have little affection: how is that possible, for they seem to like company to the last? I should as soon think of taking leave of everybody if I was dying. Of my cotemporaries for whom I do not care, I have seen or known enough, or too much, and to converse with young people is like asking for the beginning of a story of which one is never to hear the end. With you I can never pass time enough, and alas! pass very little; you are not, ought not to be so indifferent to the world as I am, and as you live more out of it, why should not you keep up a little acquaintance with it? Your chief reason against coming is worn out by length of time, and other circumstances are such as to dispense with the reiteration of the grievance. It would not be expected, and probably not desired; I dare to say the coolness is sufficiently established.

As I am in town you may expect to talk of what you will see so much in the newspapers, the commitment of Mr. Sayer; but it appears to me so nonsensical a business, that I charitably conclude the ministers have some deeper scheme in view. They can never have sent a man to the Tower that they should have sent to Bedlam, if they do not want a pretence for greater strokes; or choose to be laughed at for this, rather than have the people find fault with something else. However, they have brought themselves into such difficulties that I shall not wonder if they are puzzled which to prefer, and as it certainly is not genius that has led them into the scrape, it is not likely to help them out.

Tell me what is more to my purpose, what you have been doing. I am going to read Sterne's *Letters*. From Paris I have absolutely brought nothing at all: my good

friend, Europe, is worn out; perhaps genius may rekindle in America, but what is that to me? Adieu!

P.S. I have run through a volume of Sterne's *Letters*, and have read more unentertaining stuff. The Duke of Grafton, Lord Lyttelton, and the Bishop of Peterborough[1] divided yesterday with the opposition. Don't you think the ship is sinking? Come and see.

1655. To the Duke of Richmond.

My dear Lord, Oct. 27, 1775.

You have not been a very active opposition, but may plead in excuse that you could do no good. *Now* you can—or never. Give the ministers no respite. Press them with questions and motions, leave their poor heads no time to think of what they ought to think of, the next campaign. Call for papers. Don't mind being refused. Talk of their waste. Ask for pension lists, inquire after those scandalous ones to the widows or wives of Bradshaw, Nuthall[1], Fordyce. Lament the hard fate of the *poor country gentlemen* who must pay for all this waste, and the enormous expenses of the war too. Inquire how much of the national Debt has been paid in twelve years—and how much the late Addresses have cost. Ask if 5,000*l.* has not been sent this year to bribe the Indians, who yet have not joined *them*. Ask what douceurs have been given to Scotch contractors. Ask what the Catholics in Canada have done in return for the restoration of their religion and the abolition of juries

Letter 1654.—[1] Dr. Hinchliffe.

Letter 1655.—[1] Thomas Nuthall, Solicitor to the Treasury; he died a few hours after being shot by a highwayman on Hounslow Heath in March 1775. Horace Walpole states that he had embezzled nineteen thousand pounds, and that his widow had a pension of three hundred pounds to induce her to give up her husband's papers; he had been engaged in many election matters. (*Last Journals*, vol. i. p. 496.)

—and will you not ask who was the author of that code? Is abolition of juries part of the spirit of toleration? Will you not inquire whether Lord Dunmore[2] has not for these two years (before the Virginians took any part) endeavoured to involve them in a war with the Indians? Will you not ask whether they have not tried to raise Roman Catholics in Ireland? Suppose you inquired what the prosecutions of Wilkes cost (above 100,000*l.*), and whether they intend (for the ease of country gentlemen) to lay out as much on Sayer. Will you not complain how long the half-pay was delayed, nor inquire into the expenses of the transports to Boston? Will you not lament the hard fate of the soldiers forced to go against their countrymen, and then left without bark or bandages for their wounds, and with nothing but salt provisions? Will you not smile at Gage being recalled and made Generalissimo? In short, will you neither laugh nor cry, or will you leave them to laugh if you do not make them cry? The Duke of Grafton and Lord Lyttelton see their difficulties—will you not make them feel them? Why did General Burgoyne desire to be recalled? and why is he still employed? Since the Prerogative Proclamation cuts off all intercourse, is Parliament to vote money in the dark? Will you not move to know whether Halifax and Nova Scotia and Quebec are gone? Will you not complain of all intelligence being stifled, and the nation being kept in profound ignorance and delusion? Are there no petitions from the West Indian Islands? Shall not the good country gentlemen be let into their situation? In short, my dear Lord, if you please, you may pelt and harass them with questions and delays, which they will attend more to than to America. Frighten them, or at least other people, with the French preparing to attack us in the East Indies. And pray ask

[2] Governor of Virginia.

whether the stocks have not been kept up by the trust-money in Chancery. I will engage to furnish you with motions and grievances to midsummer—and if you keep this and turn to it, you will not want subjects. Tell them of all their false promises and prophecies, not one of which has been fulfilled; and do not forget Lord Hillsborough's breach of the King's faith. You have spirit and activity enough yourself, my Lord—breathe it into your friends; and make them inquire whether the conciliatory commissioners are gone, and what their commissions are; and whether they expect the Americans will trust them, *when the vile equivocatory bill of conciliation last year Lord North himself could not carry till Wedderburn declared it was not meant in earnest*?—but is it not plain, by their having recourse to it in the Speech, that they are already treating? Nor is this the only falsehood in the Speech: they talk of foreign Powers offering them troops; is *begging* being *offered*? And if those foreign Powers are not Russia, but little Hesse, &c., are those foreign *Powers*? I would even move to address, that if Russians are sent, no post may be put into their hands—no matter for a negative being put; it would get into the votes and spread jealousy.

There, my Lord, is a plan for your campaign. I am very presumptuous; but I will ask an account of it at the end of the session. I hope you are content with Mr. C.[3]

1656. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, Oct. 28, 1775.

As this letter will go to Paris by a private hand before it gets to the post, I shall not change the late free style of my letters, but speak my mind. Not having always the same opportunity, I shall be more circumspect both for your sake and my own.

[3] Probably General Conway.

At my return I found everything in great confusion. The ministers had only provoked and united—not intimidated, wounded, or divided America. Errors in or neglect of execution have rendered everything much worse; and at this instant they are not sure that the King has a foot of dominion left on that continent. Boston must be, if it is not, abandoned: Halifax, with a stand of seven thousand arms, artillery, &c., is taken[1],—and well it might be! It was guarded but by fifty men! Canada is in equal danger, and the first letters are likely to say it is gone. The ministers say it will take sixty thousand men to reconquer America. They will as soon have sixty thousand armies. Whether they can get any Russians is not even yet certain; and, as it is said they must buy them by ceding some post, it is not credible that the other European Powers will wink at that growing puissance becoming a maritime one. Distresses and difficulties increase every day, and genius does not burgeon in proportion.

Before I tell you of the opening of the Parliament, I must treat you with a farce, which is contrary to the theatric rule. Whether they were frightened themselves, or meant to frighten others, two days before the meeting, the ministers cried out, 'A plot!' and took and committed to the Tower a Mr. Sayer, a banker of no great credit, and lately one of Wilkes's sheriffs. A young American officer of still worse character swore Sayer had tried to bribe him to betray the Tower; and, as if that was not trusting him enough, communicated his intention of seizing the King as he should go to the House. The ministers, as grave as they looked, could not keep anybody from laughing—no, though they trebled the Guards. In short, I have heard this morning that they have blundered in the warrant, just as they did in Wilkes's, must release Sayer, and he will be at

LETTER 1656.—[1] This did not prove true. *Walpole.*

liberty, instead of being, as he ought to be, in Bedlam. Earl Rochford[2] will be prosecuted in his room, instead of being shut up for a fool, as he ought to be.

In both Houses the war was brisk and warm; the Lords sat till eleven, and the Commons till four, and the court was galled, though it kept the field. In the former House the Lord Privy Seal Grafton deserted and fired on them; so did the *virtuous* Lord Lyttelton[3], whom they have so much tried to blanch; but as they had only given him whitewash, not money to buy it, he is seeking to plunder from the other camp. In the Commons, Mr. Conway, in a better speech than ever was made, exposed all their outrages and blunders; and Charles Fox told Lord North that nor Alexander nor Cæsar had ever conquered so much as he had lost in one campaign. Even his Lordship's friends, nay the Scotch, taunt him in public with his laziness.

This is a sketch of the present situation: I think it will not mend abroad, and must grow more turbulent at home. France and Spain, by only feeding the war underhand, can baffle all our attempts; and without their declaring themselves, we must exhaust our men, money, navies, and trade. These are the four trifling articles we pay for the old scheme of arbitrary power. When will the Kings of England learn how great they may be by the constitution; how sure of ruin if they try to be despotic? Cannot the fate of the Stuarts teach even the House of Hanover to have common sense? In the meantime, if France has the sense to keep its present ministers[4], it will soon be greater than ever. I could not have believed, if I had not seen with my own eyes, how very flourishing it is to what

[2] The Secretary of State who committed Sayer. *Walpole.*

[3] Thomas, second Lord Lyttelton. *Walpole.*

[4] It had not; Turgot was removed, and Malesherbes resigned. *Walpole.*

it was four years ago. It is safe, too, in that country to indulge the people in plenty, ease, liberty; for they who could admire even Louis Quatorze adored Henri Quatre; but what signify commonplace reflections? Princes do not read my letters, but always forfeit their own greatness by listening to ministers who dip them in visions of power only to augment their own. A king might go to sleep and be happy, and let his people be so, if he had no ministers, who would abuse his authority during his nap. Adieu! my dear Sir; I have not time or occasion to say more. I have given you a clue to my future letters, and you will not want to have notes to them.

1657. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, Nov. 9, 1775.

You say ironically, Madam, that I do not think at all about politics. I object to the expression, more than to the purport of that phrase, if you mean by it that I am eager. The truth is, I think too seriously on our present situation to be eager. Eagerness implies hopes—and I have none. I think this country undone, almost beyond redemption. Victory in any war but a civil one fascinates mankind with a vision of glory. What should we gain by triumph itself? Would America laid waste, deluged with blood, plundered, enslaved, replace America flourishing, rich, and free? Do we want to reign over it, as the Spaniards over Peru, depopulated? Are desolate regions preferable to commercial cities? But if the provincials conquer, are they, like lovers, to kiss and be friends? Who are the heroes, where are the statesmen, that shall restore us to the position in which we stood two years ago?

These reflections fill me with melancholy, not with ardour. My pride, as an Englishman, is hurt. I often go to France

without loving that country, and I know with indignation, I saw with indignation, that they exult in our blunders and absurdity. We have already saved them more than half the labour of the next war, and shall bring it on as soon again as it would have come. *Then* will the ministers triumph? *Then* will begging another peace avail? Perhaps I am foolish to feel all this. Young men that must live to see it would have reason to be hurt, if young men were so ill employed as to anticipate the vexations of age. I probably have little time to be witness to the humiliations that are approaching. Father Paul's[1] *esto perpetua!* was more the prayer of a good man, than of a wise one. Countries are but great families, that rise from obscurity to dignity and then degenerate. This little island, that for many centuries was but a merchant, married a *great fortune* in the last war, got a title, grew insolent and extravagant, despised its original counter, quarrelled with its factors, kicked its plebeian wife out of doors, and thought, by putting on an old red coat, to hector her relations out of the rest of her fortune, which remained in their hands as trustees. Europe, that was jealous of this upstart captain's sudden rise, encouraged him in his folly, in hopes of seeing him quite undone. End of volume the first. The second part is in the press.

News of to-day.—The Duke of Grafton dismissed.

News of to-morrow.—Lord George Germaine, Secretary of State.

No news.—Lord Lyttelton to have a place[2].

I have been in pain for the Duke of Gloucester; but as no account has come since last Friday, I flatter myself he is out of danger, his disorder being the same as he had

LETTER 1657.—[1] Pietro Sarpi (1552–1623), known as Fra Paolo, the historian of the Council of Trent.

[2] That of Chief Justice in Eyre south of Trent.

before when last at Florence, and which would either have carried him off soon, or must have been stopped by the bark, as I trust it has been. But I am prepared against all events: time is a great philosophizer. You say you augur so ill, Madam, that you will not be scandalized at the gravity of my letter. Mine take their complexion from the colour of the hour, and, as cheerfulness oftenest predominates in me, I shall laugh again. It is very hard if they who are innocent of their country's ruin may not smile, as well as they who are guilty of it. I can conceive why Cæsar should have cut his own throat, but I never understood why Cato did.

1658. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, Nov. 14, 1775.

Your letter, my dear Sir, of the 28th, which I received last night, is infinitely kind to me—but is that new? We had not only been alarmed to the utmost about the Duke[1], but remained ten days in that anxiety. Thank God! yesterday a letter under his own hand dispelled all our fears, and he is so well as to be set out to Rome. I am very sorry you had received no orders for your behaviour, because it leaves the Duke room to think you might have done more than I hope you have done; but your first duty is to the King; you were my friend long before I had the honour of knowing his Royal Highness, and no attachments of mine can make me ever even wish that any friend of mine should act contrary to his duty. I am sure you have not; and if the Duke should not be quite pleased with you, though I flatter myself he is too just not to weigh your situation, you must bear it with patience, and comfort yourself with having acted rightly.

Letter 1658.—[1] The Duke of Gloucester. *Walpole.*

Though I hear so much of it, I know not what to say of America. It is certain that the campaign has answered none of the expectations of the administration. It seems to be the opinion now that they will think of pacific measures. They have even talked in Parliament of treating. You may be sure that system would be agreeable to my politics; but I doubt peace is not so near. The Parliament grants whatever is asked; and yet a great alteration has happened in the administration. The Duke of Grafton has changed sides, and was turned out last Friday. Lord Rochford, too, has retired, though not out of humour; and Lord Dartmouth has quitted the American province and taken the Privy Seal. Lord George Germaine is made Secretary of State for America, and Lord Weymouth has taken the southern province. Lord Ashburnham is to be Groom of the Stole, Lord Pelham Master of the Great Wardrobe, and Lord Lyttelton Justice in Eyre. The town is impatient to see whether this change of men implies any change of measures. I do not see why it should, for none of the new ministers have ever inclined to the Americans; and I doubt whether the success of the latter will make them have a better disposition towards the present administration. They have felt their strength, and experienced how much less hurt we can do them than we imagined. If they have such ideas of independence as have been imputed to them, and as probably some ambitious men among them may have, we have done nothing to convince them that their plan is impracticable; but for me, I own I know nothing, and all my conjectures may be wrong.

We have scarce any other news. Madame Kingston has petitioned the House of Lords for her trial; but they seem neither eager to acquit or condemn her. Nobody would mind the first, and she would not mind the second, as

it would go only to infamy, which she has shown she can digest.

Orloff the Great, or rather the Big[2], is here; and as proud of his infamous diamonds as the Duchess of Kingston herself. He dances gigantic dances and makes gigantic love; but no conquests: yet he has quitted his post with honour, for the Empress has appointed two to supply his functions—I suppose they are Gog and Magog. Orloff talks an infinite deal of nonsense; but parts are not necessary to a royal favourite or to an assassin.

I am rejoiced you are to have so much of your nephew, and that Lady Lucy is better. I long heartily for a little *Man-n.*

You will ere long see Mr. Pars, a young painter, who is going to study at Rome. I had given him a strong letter to you. Poor man! He has lost his portmanteau between Calais and Paris, and with it everything he had in the world; yet he persists. Pray be kind to him for my sake and for his misfortune. He is very ingenious, and has taken to oils. He was admirable in washed views, and has done several of Strawberry, of which he can talk to you by heart. Assist him too in recommendations at Rome as much as you can. He is particularly patronized by Lord Palmerston, one of the Lords of the Admiralty.

So the Pretender is in a dying way! and wants an heir!—It is not a race of phœnixes. Sir Roger Newdigate is at Rome, and formerly would have been proud to be chief mourner at his funeral.

You may imagine I shall not be quite easy till the Duchess[3] is delivered and well. I trembled for her when the Duke was ill, as his death might have occasioned hers too.

[2] The favourite lover of the Empress Catherine II. *Walpole.*

[3] The Duchess of Gloucester. *Walpole.*

1659. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, Nov. 18, 1775.

Be perfectly at ease and happy, our Lady! for *our* Lord spoke with modesty, decency, dignity, sense, and conviction. He regretted being forced to quit his friends[1], though not so much as they regret his quitting them: all this I firmly believe, for I know nothing of the matter, having gone out of town yesterday, and being but this minute returned. I do know he spoke, for he told me so himself when I called yesterday to leave your cup with him; but as he is the last man in the world to commend himself, he would not tell me a syllable, but that he soon recovered the first awful moment of hearing his own voice in a dead silence. I will answer for all the rest. He said his brother spoke charmingly, and Charles Fox better than ever. He made such a pathetic *éloge* of the two brothers that every feeling eye was in tears. I am going about the town to hear all their praises, but I must not expect them in some houses. Oh, *notre dame*, give us a son and heir! I would vow a silver babe to Loretto, if that would do.

1660. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Nov. 23, 1775.

As the two ladies must be very angry at Lord O., I am not much surprised, Madam, that they impute his desertion to you. They must both think it a great reflection on a man's understanding to be governed by his wife; and to charge it on your Ladyship is to depreciate *him*. In truth, when one can fix the blemish of madness on Mr. Crewe,

Letter 1659.—[1] Lord Ossory and his brother, Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick, had left the court party, and declared themselves in opposition.

only to keep another nephew from making him a visit, one must have very little charity for one's neighbour. However, be easy, Madam; I dare to say they will make Lord Ossory amends by offering to buy him off, and if they could disgrace him in that manner, they would perfectly forgive him. The speeches have given me additional pleasure, as I hear a third aunt, who is not displeased at them, was told (before they spoke) that they were men of no consequence but from being her nephews. I hope they will keep up their own importance, or they will be swallowed up in Lord George's[1] fame, who engrosses all tongues. He puts me in mind of some lines written by Lord Lansdowne, when prisoner in the Tower, in the same room where my father had been confined; the last verse was,

Some fall so hard, they bound and rise again.

I think nobody can doubt of Lord George's resolution, since he has exposed himself to the artillery of the whole town. Indeed I always believed him brave, and that he sacrificed himself to sacrifice Prince Ferdinand.

I wish I could tell you anything but politics, Madam, politician as you are christened by your godmothers; but one hears nothing else. On Sunday night, indeed, I was singularly entertained at Monsieur de Guines's, who gave a vast supper to the Prince of Hesse and the goddesses most in fashion, as the Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Sefton, &c. We were twenty-eight at supper; but before it, a Monsieur Tessier[2], of whom I have heard much in France, acted an entire play of ten characters, and varied his voice, and countenance, and manner, for each so perfectly, that he

LETTER 1660. — [1] Lord George Germain.

[2] 'M. Le Tessier, receveur général des fermes de Lyon, homme d'esprit, ayant la passion du théâtre, et étant comédien de la tête aux pieds, a imaginé de former sa voix, naturellement flexible, à lire tous les rôles d'une pièce, en leur donnant à chacun le ton de leur âge et de leur caractère.' (Grimm, *Correspondance Littéraire*, ed. 1831, vol. viii. p. 310.)

did not name the persons that spoke, nor was it necessary. I cannot decide to which part he did most justice, but I would go to the play every night if I could see it so acted.

I have heard to-day that your Ladyship has not the sole honour of perverting Lord Ossory. *I* am said to be the serpent that whispered Eve; and should be proud of it, if both imputations were not affronts to Lord Ossory's understanding, who will do me the justice to allow that I had so much more respect for it, that I never had the impertinence of his angry friends to imagine he was to be led; a civility for which he is not much obliged to them. Nor do they know how very seldom I see him, though I am so much in his way wherever he goes. It is an additional reason for my wishing your Ladyship in town, that I should see him sometimes. My poor old Lady Blandford is dying[3]; she fell down on Monday and broke her thigh—at 78!

P.S. As I was going to seal my letter, I received your Ladyship's thanks for the cup, which indeed did not deserve that you should give yourself so much trouble on purpose. You have always been so good to me, Madam, and I am so grateful that if my *souvenirs* were marked with cups, there would be many more than milestones from hence to Ampthill.

1661. To the Rev. William Mason.

Nov. 27, 1775.

I thought it long since I heard from you. It is plain you did not forget me, for the first moment of an opportunity to show me kindness made you show it. Fortunately I had written to Lord Strafford the very day you wrote to me, and our letters passed each other, though without bowing.

[3] She lived till 1779.

I think it still more fortunate that I had not written sooner, because I like to be obliged to you. I had delayed because in truth I had nothing to say but what I thought; and when my friends and I do not think alike, I prefer silence to contradiction or disputes, for I cannot say what I do not think, especially to my friends; to other people one can talk a good deal of nonsense, which serves instead of thinking.

Your delay of coming displeases me, because what I wish, I wish for immediately. When spring comes, I shall be glad my joy was postponed, and I like better to see you at Strawberry than in town, especially when Strawberry is in its beauty: and as you and it are two chiefs of the few pleasures I have left, or to come, I am luxurious and love a complete banquet.

What shall I say more? talk politics? no; we think too much alike. England was, Scotland is—indeed by the blunders the latter has made one sees its Irish origin,—but I had rather talk of anything else. I see nothing but ruin, whatever shall happen; and what idle solicitude is that of childless old people, who are anxious about the first fifty years after their death, and do not reflect that in the eternity to follow, fifty or five hundred years are a moment, and that all countries fall sooner or later!

Naturally I fly to books: there is a finis too, for I cannot read Dean Tucker[1], nor newspapers. We have had nothing at all this winter but Sterne's *Letters*, and what are almost as nothingly—Lady Luxborough's. She does not write ill, or, as I expected, affectedly, like a woman, but talks of *scrawls*, and of her letters being *stupid*. She had no spirit, no wit, knew no events; she idolizes poor Shenstone, who was scarce above her, and flatters him, to be flattered. A

Letter 1661. — [1] Josiah Tucker (1712–1799), Dean of Gloucester. He published several pamphlets on the American War.

stronger proof of her having no taste is, that she says coldly, she likes Gray's Churchyard *well.* In good truth the productions of this country and age are suited to its natives. Mr. Cumberland, the maker of plays, told me lately, it *was pity Gray's letters were printed; they had disappointed him much.* No doubt he likes Sterne's, and Shenstone's, and Lady Luxborough's. Oh, Dodsley, print away: you will never want authors or readers, unless a classic work like Gray's Life should, as Richardson said of Milton, be 'born two thousand years after its time!'

I approve your printing in manuscript, that is, not for the public, for who knows how long the public will be able, or be permitted to read? Bury a few copies against this island is rediscovered. Some American versed in the old English language will translate it, and revive the true taste in gardening; though he will smile at the diminutive scenes on the little Thames when he is planting a forest on the banks of the Oronoko. I love to skip into futurity and imagine what will be done on the giant scale of a new hemisphere; but I am in little London, and must go and dress for a dinner with some of the inhabitants of that ancient metropolis, now in ruins, which was really for a moment the capital of a large empire, but the poor man who made it so outlived himself and the duration of the empire.

1662. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Dec. 4, 1775.

I perceived I had not heard from your Ladyship for some time, but your silence would not have occasioned mine, if I had known anything worth telling you. I have not the talent of my brethren, the gazetteers, who always learn a sheet full of news, whether anything happens or not; but then they have a crop of debates. I believe

nobody in London knows so little of what passes in Parliament as I do. Mr. Ackland[1] had run his head against Charles Fox a week before I heard of it. The town is beautified with fourscore knights, of new or old Scotia, in yellow ribbons, and yet I have not seen one of them. How should I see or know anything? I seldom stir out of my house before seven in the evening, see very few persons, and go to fewer places, make no new acquaintance, and have seen most of my old wear out. Loo at Princess Amelie's, loo at Lady Hertford's, are the capital events of my history, and a Sunday alone, at Strawberry, my chief entertainment. All this is far from gay; but as it neither gives me *ennui*, nor lowers my spirits, it is not uncomfortable, and I prefer it to being *déplacé* in younger company. My greatest objection is, that it often makes me a very unentertaining correspondent at Ampthill; but this is almost as dull a season of the year as autumn. I would promise it should mend after Christmas, but happily you will be in town then, and I shall pass my time more agreeably, and have no occasion to write.

I am very sorry Lady Holland is out of order; I hope not at all seriously, and that you have no occasion to be in the least alarmed. The sale at Holland House will produce treasures. I did not go; it would have been a horrid sight to me who have lived there so much, but I hear the most common furniture has sold as dear as relics.

There is another thing concerns me too,—Sir George Macartney's voyage to the Government of the Grenades.

LETTER 1662.—[1] Major John Dyke Acland (d. 1778), eldest son of Sir Thomas Acland, seventh Baronet, whom he predeceased; M.P. for Callington. He married a daughter of Fox's uncle, the Earl of Ilchester. 'In one of the debates on the militia, Charles Fox saying it was not fit to be trusted in hands who could petition the King for pushing the war against America, Mr. Ackland, his cousin, a hot Tory, warmly resented it, and said it was in fitter hands than in those of men who had ruined themselves by the most scandalous vices. This personality, unprovoked by any, gave offence. Fox replied: he confessed his errors, and wished he could atone for them.' (*Last Journals*, vol. i. p. 523.)

There is nobody who is merely an acquaintance that I should regret more. He is extremely good-humoured, equal, conversable on all subjects, unaffected, and perfectly agreeable in great or small companies. Methinks it would be very just to write a *North Briton* against Lord Bute for doing *so little* for his own son-in-law.

It is a little late in my letter to express my grief for your Ladyship's—what disorder? You have not told me, only that it is a sort of influenza; so I have a proportionate sort of concern. It would be very inconvenient to me to be much afflicted just now for anything, for the King of Prussia is dying. I would venture to rejoice even if I were his subject, for a worse Dionysius cannot succeed.

Pray, Madam, tell the nymphs of Ampthill that if I had a spark of imagination left it should be at their service; but old people do nothing but tell old stories, far from inventing new. The only thing I would ever allow myself to write more should be like Brantôme; but as everybody's history in these days is written in newspapers or magazines, my trouble is luckily saved, and for anything else, it is a maxim of mine that old folks ought to do nothing at all, for nothing becomes them. I am very strict to this rule, and, if I ever break it, set it down that I begin to dote.

Tuesday.

I have just sent to Lady Holland, who has had a good night, and is much better.

1663. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, Dec. 8, 1775.

I HAVE received another kind letter from you, my dear Sir, about the Duke and Duchess. You are very good to inform me; for though the Duchess's daughters[1] send me general accounts, I know nothing directly, having received

LETTER 1663.—[1] The Ladies Waldegrave.

but a single letter from her Royal Highness since they set out. I need not say to you that I never had such an honour from the Duke. He, I do not doubt, is recovered, and will for some time be the better, as he was before, from so wholesome an illness. I cannot be so tranquil on her situation till after her delivery. The greatness of her courage makes her support conflicts; but, perhaps, women of less resolution, who abandon themselves to fears, undergo less struggles.

Your brother, I believe, is recovered, at least Mr. Croft thinks so. He is always lame, it is true, but his face still fresh and juvenile. You and I are wrinkled parchments to our elder brothers. They are Glastonbury thorns and bloom at their Christmas. I pretend to grow a little fatter, but every other winter unravels me like Penelope's web.

There is nothing new here, at least within the sphere of my knowledge. That circle is of slender extent, and does not intersect either that of the court or the other of the opposition: the secrets of neither reach me, who seek not to penetrate them. We have both martial and pacific symptoms. Commissaries[2] are going with olive-branches, and Acts of Parliament and regiments with daggers and swords. We seem to enrage America, as if it were a passionate man who is very sorry the moment his passion is over. The House of Commons sits eternally, though half of the usual number are gone out of town.

I saw the Duchess of Beaufort the other night, who inquired much after you. You know her daughter[3] is soon to marry Lord Granby.

Tell me truly, is or has the Gabrielli been a great singer? She has, at least, not honoured us but with a most slender low voice. Her action is just, but colder than a vestal's.

[2] Lord Howe and his brother were appointed Commissaries.
[3] Lady Mary Somerset.

However, as you know, she carries the resemblance no further, and, consequently, is kept by a Mr. Piers, a very rich gentleman of Yorkshire, who is so profuse to her, that I suppose she will be more capricious than ever. We import superannuated sirens, and spoil them more than the Italians can afford to do, who at least enjoy them young.

That brave statue, Sir Charles Saunders[4], died yesterday. The present war has not yet furnished us with any recruit of heroes. A civil war used to be prolific—Europe is very much worn out. It is America's turn to be fruitful of genius. The last comet of this hemisphere, the King of Prussia, is on its *return.* A wit of last century, when *conceits* were in fashion, would have said that its blazing tail turned out, as some philosophers have held, to be water, for he is dying of a dropsy. I care not of what; the world will be delivered from one of its visitations. When Voltaire follows him, their meeting would make a good Dialogue of the Dead.

I will not lengthen my letter when I have no more to say, for though we have an empire at each end of the world, and a war in both, they do not keep us in daily news; and, what is much stranger, their metropolis, London, stagnates; but it is generally so about Christmas and autumn: in February, March, April, and May, our pulses are very feverish.

1664. To the Rev. William Cole.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 10, 1775.

I was very sorry to have been here, dear Sir, the day you called on me in town. It is so difficult to uncloister you, that I regret not seeing you when you are out of your own ambry. I have nothing new to tell you that is very old; but you can inform me of something within your own

[4] Admiral and Knight of the Bath. He was remarkably taciturn. *Walpole.*

district. Who is the author, E. B. G.[1], of a version of Mr. Gray's Latin Odes into English? and of an Elegy on my wolf-devoured dog, poor Tory?—a name you will marvel at in a dog of mine; but his godmother was the widow of Alderman Parsons, who gave him at Paris to Lord Conway, and he to me. The author is a poet, but makes me blush, for he calls Mr. Gray and me *congenial pair*. Alas! I have no genius; and if any symptom of talent, so inferior to Gray's, that Milton and Quarles might as well be coupled together. We rode over the Alps in the same chaise, but Pegasus drew on his side, and a cart-horse on mine. I am too jealous of his fame to let us be coupled together.

This author says he has lately printed at Cambridge a Latin translation of the Bards; I should be much obliged to you for it.

I do not ask you if Cambridge has produced anything, for it never does. Have you made any discoveries? Has Mr. Lort? Where is he? Does Mr. Tyson engrave no more?

My plates for Strawberry advance leisurely. I am about nothing. I grow old and lazy, and the present world cares for nothing but politics, and satisfies itself with writing in newspapers. If they are not bound up and preserved in libraries, posterity will imagine that the art of printing was gone out of use. Lord Hardwicke has indeed reprinted his heavy volume of Sir Dudley Carleton's *Dispatches*, and says I was in the wrong to despise it. I never met with anybody that thought otherwise. What signifies raising the dead so often, when they die the next minute? Adieu!

Yours ever,

H. W.

LETTER 1664.—[1] Edward Burnaby Greene (d. 1788), at this time a brewer in Westminster. He published various translations from Greek and Latin poets.

1665. To the Countess of Ailesbury.

Arlington Street, Dec. 11, 1775.

Did you hear that scream?—Don't be frightened, Madam; it was only the Duchess of Kingston last Sunday was sevennight at chapel: but it is better to be prepared; for she has sent word to the House of Lords that her nerves are so bad she intends to scream for these two months, and therefore they must put off her trial. They are to take her throes into consideration to-day; and that there may be sufficient room for the length of her veil and train, and attendants, have a mind to treat her with Westminster Hall. I hope so, for I should like to see this *comédie larmoyante*; and, besides, I conclude, it would bring your Ladyship to town. You shall have timely notice.

There is another comedy infinitely worth seeing—Monsieur Le Tessier. He is Préville, and Caillaud, and Garrick, and Weston[1], and Mrs. Clive, all together; and as perfect in the most insignificant part, as in the most difficult. To be sure, it is hard to give up loo in such fine weather, when one can play from morning till night. In London, Pam can scarce get a house till ten o'clock. If you happen to see the General, your husband, make my compliments to him, Madam; his friend the King of Prussia is going to the devil and Alexander the Great.

1666. To the Rev. William Cole.

Arlington Street, Dec. 14, 1775.

Our letters probably passed by each other on the road, for I wrote to you on Tuesday, and have this instant received one from you, which I answer directly, to beg pardon for

Letter 1665.—[1] Thomas Weston (1737–1776), comedian.

my incivility, nay, ingratitude, in not thanking you for your present of a whole branch of most reputable ancestors, the *Derehaughs*—why, the *Derehaughs* alone would make gentlemen of half the modern peers, English or Irish. I doubt my journey to France was got into my head, and left no room for an additional quarter—but I have given it to Edmondson, and ordered him to take care that I am born again from the *Derehaughs*. This Edmondson has got a ridiculous notion into his head that another, and much ancienter of my progenitors, Sir Henry Walpole, married his wife Isabella Fitz-Osbert, when she was widow to Sir Walter Jernegan; whereas all the *Old Testament* says Sir Walter married Sir Henry's widow[1]. Pray send me your authority to confound this gainsayer, if you know anything particular of the matter.

I had not heard of the painting you tell me of. As those boobies, the Society of Antiquaries, have gotten hold of it, I wonder their *piety* did not make them bury it again, as they did the clothes of Edward I. I have some notion that in Vertue's MSS. or somewhere else, I don't know where, I have read of some ancient painting at the Rose Tavern. This I will tell *you*—but Mr. Gough is such a bear, that I shall not satisfy him about it. That Society, when they are puzzled, have recourse to me; and that would be so often, that I shall not encourage them. They may blunder as much as they please, from their heavy President[2] down to the pert Governor Pownall, who accounts for everything immediately, before the Creation, or since. Say only to Mr. Gough, that I said I had not leisure now to examine Vertue's MSS. If I find anything there, *you* shall know, but I have no longer any eagerness to communicate what I discover. When there was so little taste for MSS. which

LETTER 1666.—[1] This was the case.
[2] Dean Milles.

Mr. Gray thought worth transcribing, and which were so valuable, would one offer more pearls?

Boydel brought me this morning another number of the prints from the pictures at Houghton. Two or three in particular are most admirably executed—but alas! it will be twenty years before the set is completed. That is too long to look forward at any age—and at mine!—nay, people will be tired in a quarter of the time. Boydel, who knows this country, and still more this town, thinks so too. Perhaps there will be newer, or at least more fashionable ways of engraving, and the old will be despised—or, which is still more likely, nobody will be able to afford the expense. Who would lay a plan for anything in an overgrown metropolis hurrying to its fall?

I will return you Mr. Gough's letter when I get a frank. Adieu!

1667. To Dr. Percy.

Dec. 14, 1775.

Mr. Walpole is extremely sorry he was out twice when Dr. Percy gave himself the trouble of calling, and will have the honour of waiting on Dr. Percy next Tuesday at one o'clock if he will give leave. In the meantime Mr. Walpole (who is going out of town for two days) is very happy to oblige the Doctor and consequently the public, with the use of Sir T. Wyat's Speeches: and will be as ready to lend the drawings of Lord Surrey and Sir Thomas, if the Doctor intends to give prints of them.

Letter 1667.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in British Museum.

1668. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 17, 1775.

I am afraid the Pope will be shocked: matters go very ill with his friend the Duchess of Kingston. She pretended to tease the House of Lords for her trial, though privately soliciting against it. Lord Mansfield entered the lists as her knight; and contended for a private hearing in the chamber of Parliament; and treated the affair very lightly. This revolted the Chancellor[1]; and he drew her failings in very ungentle colours. A committee was appointed to examine precedents. Her Grace was alarmed; went to St. James's Chapel at eight in the morning; and was delivered of a scream that roused all the palace. The obdurate Lords' committees proceeded. The tide was turned; and everybody spoke all they knew: collusion between the Duchess and Lord Bristol, to impose on the Ecclesiastical Court; money taken by the Earl; perjury on both sides; the register of their marriage torn out, which is felony! a new certificate said to be forged: in short, nothing but a trial in Westminster Hall could satisfy justice and the public. Screams now ripened to madness; and the Duchess begged a respite for two months. That was pretty long. Her physicians were sent for. Three appeared: and, though they would not, as she desired, say that she would be mad for two months, they did allow that she is troubled with a great alienation of mind: in proof of which she has written to the King, to remind him of his grandfather's and his own goodness to her; hoping he would not abandon her in her distress; and begging a *noli prosequi*; which his Majesty will not grant her. The committee went on; and have decided that she shall be tried in Westminster Hall:

Letter 1668.—[1] Lord Bathurst.

and Lord Lyttelton, as bashful as herself, said that, as she could not pretend to chastity or modesty, there was no room for compassion. This hopeful young man, who, on being refused a place, spoke *for* the Americans; and, in two days, on getting one, *against* them, being reproached with such precipitate changes, said that, with his fortune, nobody could suppose he thought of the value of the salary.

What this heroic lady will attempt next is very unknown. If she decamps, outlawry and forfeitures follow. Laudanum she had recourse to formerly on an emergency. If she adheres to frenzy she must retire to a mad-house. If she braves her fate, I shall not wonder if she escapes. A fair one, more artful, but not of so high rank, nor patronized by a Chief Justice, has just foiled the law; though nobody questions her guilt. This is a Mrs. Margaret Caroline Rudd; whose history would make as large a volume as Madame de Kingston's. She sent her lawyer a brief of which he could not make head or tail. He went to her for one more clear: 'And do you imagine,' said she, 'that I will trust you, or any attorney in England, with the truth of my story? Take your brief; meet me in the Old Bailey, and I will ask you the necessary questions.' At her trial, she did write sixty notes to him, and with such artful interrogatories, that she was acquitted; and the whole court shouted with applause. I must tell you one more anecdote of Mrs. Rudd. Preparatory to her trial, she sent for some brocaded silks to a mercer; she pitched on a rich one, and ordered him to cut off the proper quantity; but the mercer, reflecting that if she was hanged, as was probable, he should never be paid, pretended he had no scissors; but would carry home the piece, cut off what she wanted, and send it to Newgate. She saw his apprehension; pulled out her pocket-book; and giving him a bank-note of twenty pounds, said, 'There is a pair of scissors.'

Such quickness is worth an hundred screams. We have no Joans of Arc, nor Catharines de' Medici; but this age has heroines after its own fashion: ay, and heroes too. *Arts and sciences have* not only *travelled west*, but north, too. Prodigious crimes can flourish in the most rigorous climates. Except poisoning the last Pope, Rome itself, the soil of Neros and Borgias, has not produced a murder worth sixpence these two hundred years. Atrocious genius is got to Berlin and Petersburg. In two or three centuries, I suppose, there will be some horrible metropolis beyond the Atlantic, or under the South Pole: and, as the press disperses *useful* precedents, two or three kings and queens will find it suits their convenience to divide some territory, to which they have no title, near the Straits of Magellan.

Arlington Street, 18th, Monday night.

The first thing I heard to-day on coming to town made me think of writing another letter; yet as this is written, and may divert you after some days when your mind is resettled, I let it go, but haste to tell you that what by your letter to-day you seemed to expect, is arrived: your brother[2] died on Saturday. I sent instantly to Mr. Croft to know the purport of the will. He sent me word it is in his hands; that he understands he and Mr. Foote are executors, and that he is to carry it to Linton on Thursday. This will be a century to my impatience. It is what occupies me. I don't act the farce of condolence—you had not seen this brother these forty years; he had little affection for you, and was not so amiable as to make tender and lasting impressions forty years ago. I am even glad you are prepared to expect unkindness, though I should be outrageous if he could or has done you any hurt. I hope you have kept his letter that you mention. If he has

[2] Edward Louisa Mann.

attempted anything wrong, I do not believe it will be at all in favour of your nephew, but for his natural children, though he had enough of his own to leave to them. I even hope that his vaunts were only to alarm your nephew and make him more economic. Yet if it hung by a point of honour, you will not wonder if I trust not to that, who found how little equity there was in a point of honour when my father died. However, you and your nephew must certainly defend your rights; and as you are both absent, pray commission me to retain counsel for you both, or do anything else in my power: you cannot have a more zealous advocate. I have been so engrossed by this idea of injustice to you, that I have yet said nothing of what you may be sure sits next to it at my heart, the assurance that this event will at last bring you over, and that we shall meet again! I flatter myself this thought delights you as much as it does me. I own it was the moment I always looked to. It was my comfort against the melancholy idea of our never meeting again. You must now come to your country—and, I trust, to your estate.

1669. To Thomas Astle.

Sir, Dec. 19, 1775.

I am much obliged to you, and return you my thanks for the paper you have sent me. You have added a question to it, which, if I understand it, you yourself, Sir, are more capable than anybody of answering. You say, 'Is it possible that this instrument was framed by Richard Duke of Gloucester?' If by *framed* you mean drawn up, I should think Princes of the blood, in that barbarous age, were not very expert in drawing Acts of Attainder, though a branch of the law more in use then than since. But as I suppose you mean *forged*, you, Sir, so conversant in writings of that age, can judge better than any man—you may only mean

forged by his order. Your reading, much deeper than mine, may furnish you with precedents of *forged Acts of Attainder*; I never heard of one; nor does my simple understanding suggest the use of such a forgery, on cases immediately pressing; because an Act of Attainder being a matter of public notoriety, it would be revolting the common sense of all mankind to plead such an one, if it had not really existed. If it could be carried into execution by force, the force would avail without the forgery, and would be at once exaggerated and weakened by it. I cannot, therefore, conceive why Richard should make use of so absurd a trick, unless that having so little to do in so short and turbulent a reign, he amused himself with treasuring up in the Tower a forged Act for the satisfaction of those who, three hundred years afterwards, should be glad of discovering new flaws in his character. As there are men so bigoted to old legends, I am persuaded, Sir, that you would please them by communicating your question to them. They would rejoice to suppose that Richard was more criminal than even the Lancastrian historians represent him; and just at this moment I don't know whether they would not believe that Mrs. Rudd assisted him. I, who am, probably, as absurd a bigot on the other side, see nothing in the paper you have sent me, but a confirmation of Richard's innocence of the death of Clarence. As the Duke of Buckingham was appointed to superintend the execution, it is incredible that he should have been drowned in a butt of malmsey, and that Richard should have been the executioner. When a seneschal of England, or, as we call it, a Lord High Steward, is appointed for a trial, at least for execution, with all his officers, it looks very much as if, even in that age, proceedings were carried on with a little more formality than the careless writers of that time let us think. The appointment, too, of the Duke of Buckingham

for that office seems to add another improbability (and a work of supererogation) to Richard's forging the instrument. Did Richard really do nothing but what tended to increase his unpopularity by glutting mankind with lies, forgeries, and absurdities, which every man living could detect?

I take this opportunity, Sir, of telling you how sorry I am not to have seen you so long, and how glad I shall be to renew our acquaintance, especially if you like to talk over this old story with me, though I own it is of little importance, and pretty well exhausted. I am, Sir, with great regard,

Your obliged humble servant [1].

1670. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Dec. 20, 1775.

I could not write sooner, Madam, for though I certainly have as little real business as any Christian in England, so it happens that nobody is more employed. On Monday and Tuesday I wrote eight letters, and one of them was of seven pages; but it was a letter that I hope will save me a vast

Letter 1669. — [1] The following queries were appended by Walpole to a copy of this letter sent by him to Cole:—

'If there was no such Parliament held, would Richard have dared to forge an Act for it?

'Would Henry VII never have reproached him with so absurd a forgery?

'Did neither Sir T. More nor Lord Bacon ever hear of that forgery?

'As Richard declared his nephew the Earl of Warwick his successor, would he have done so if he had forged an Act of Attainder of Warwick's father?

'If it is supposed he forged the Act, when he set aside Warwick, could he pretend that Act was not known when he declared him his heir? Would not so recent an Act being unknown have proved it a forgery? And if there had been no such Parliament as that which forged it, would not that have proved it a double forgery? The Act, therefore, and the Parliament that passed it, must have been genuine, and existed, though no other record appears. The distractions of the times, the evident insufficiency or partiality of the historians of that age, and the interest of Henry VII to destroy all records that gave authority to the house of York and their title, account for our wanting evidence of that Parliament.'

many. Sir Horace Mann's elder brother is dead, the estate comes to him, and I flatter myself that a regular correspondence of thirty-four years will cease, and that I shall see him again before we meet in the Elysian fields. Antiquaries write to me too. I hoped I had done with them, but they are *still harping on my daughter*,—the old story, *Richard the Third*. I laugh at them as civilly as I can, yet they return to the charge. Then I am mighty busy about Mariette's sale, where I have been so lucky as to ruin myself. I have got Madame d'Olonne; Madame du Deffand says I have paid dearer for her than any of her lovers did in her lifetime. Item: a little bust of Nic. Poussin's wife by him in *terra cotta*, and a book of portraits in the reigns of Francis I and Henry II, that belonged to Brantôme, who has written the names; and among them is Diane de Valentinois. It is droll that even Madame d'Olonne is *en Diane*. A few days before the sale the King of France offered 300,000 livres for the whole collection: it was refused, and has not produced so much, though my correspondent, the auctioneer, says everything sold for three times what it was worth. You may imagine, Madam, I shall be in a fine taking till my old concubines arrive.

You ask me what I think of the Earl of F—— and the Irish baroness? I answer, nothing; for I don't know who they are, unless they are Lord Farnham and Lady Clermont[1]; and then I shall ask why they have stayed fifty years before they thought of one another? For the other Irish baroness, Lady Luxborough, she had a mishap with Parson Dalton, the reviver of *Comus*, and retired to a hermitage on Parnassus, as she says herself. The seraphic

LETTER 1670.—[1] Frances (d. 1820), daughter of Colonel John Murray; m. (1752) William Henry Fortescue, afterwards first Baron and Earl of Clermont.

Duchess[2], her friend, was suspected to have *chassé sur les mêmes terres*, and so it is no wonder they were intimate as they agreed *in eodem tertio*.

You ask me another question that I wish I could answer to my own satisfaction, and as gratefully as your Ladyship's goodness deserves: why I should not come to Ampthill this Christmas? I might plead, if I wished only for a decent excuse, that I have promised, if I go anywhere, to go to Park Place; or that Mr. Mann's death detains me, for he held our place[3] for Sir Edward[4] and me, and there is much to settle. But, alas! there is a worse reason: I am not young enough to fly about in dark cold days, and have an inward foe, whom I dare not provoke and rouse; and who, if in one of his moods, would make me as tiresome to my hosts as to myself. In one's latter days one must take care not to give one's friends anything but one's best moments, and yet, I don't know but with all my prudent maxims, I may venture to come to you for a day or two. I have a vast mind, and a colt's tooth I see the discreetest of us never sheds. Don't expect me; but Lord knows what may happen!

The newspapers, as soon as I could have done, told you what a fib the *Gazette* told about Canada on Saturday night. Faces, that are generally pretty round, lengthened to their shoe-strings on Sunday. On Monday evening the Cabinet determined to—seem to recover their spirits, and so though they believed every tittle of the intelligence, they pretend not to believe a word of it. Lady Mary Coke, who is in no secrets, declaimed on the misfortune at Princess Amelie's, and said how dreadful it was for people to fall into the hands of people who tear people's eyes out! I smiled: she

[2] Frances Thynne, Duchess of Somerset. Dalton acted as tutor to her son.

[3] In the Custom House.

[4] Sir Edward Walpole.

grew more incensed, and said she was sure I was glad. I said I was comforted, as I heard they put people's eyes in again; at least, I concluded so, as nobody has returned without his eyes. In good truth, I think we are pulling out our own eyes, and nobody seems to have a nostrum for putting them in again.

The Duchess cannot be tried till February, for it is recollected that Westminster Hall is a common into which all sorts of cattle must be admitted in term time. Lady Luxborough has exhausted all artful conclusions of letters, so I will never more be your Ladyship's most devoted.

P.S. They say Mrs. Rudd has been at the play in Lord Lyttelton's chariot. If the Duchess is acquitted, I suppose he will take her into keeping too, to show he is convinced of *her* virtue also, and wronged her innocence.

1671. To the Rev. William Mason.

Arlington Street, Dec. 21, 1775.

I shall make the impression of the seal to this letter as perfect as I can; yet probably it will ill answer your purpose[1], for it is only one of Wedgwood's antiques, and they are not very sharp; you exercise, I find, all your various talents, but the one I love the best *in you*. I should not say so much to everybody: a thousand pictures give me pleasure for one poem.

Foote and you agree in convicting the Duchess of ebriety, and you both prove it equally well in different ways. Nay, she seems to allow it herself, for she abandons insanity;

Letter 1671.—[1] 'I wish in your next favour... you would be pleased to seal with a very clear impression of your antique sacrifice, for I have been painting from a very bad one a figure in *chiaro oscuro* for one of my book presses, and I have succeeded so tolerably that I think it will do when finished from a better original.' (Mason to Walpole, Dec. 16, 1775.)

intends, I hear, to rest her safety on pleading guilty, lest standing on her spotless innocence should drag to light too many crimes. Lord Mansfield has added one more to his own list; his shameless protection of her.

I never heard of the imperial title you mention[2], nor believe it, indeed I know of no treaty. That foreign troops have been treated for is certain; if any are obtained, I am not in the secret. In the meantime the empire is shrunk to as narrow limits as that of the Holy Roman Empire; which when it had nothing left but one eagle made it into two, by splitting it, as cooks serve a pigeon. By this time Canada probably is no part of the imperial dominions; unless Lord Dunmore has transported it on board his own government and ship[3], where he pretends to have imprisoned one of the provincial deputies, who to-day's papers say never existed—unless by your hypothesis of alphabetic identity, one man may become another. That many men do become other men, I see every day, and so entirely other men, that they retain none of the blushing shame of their original nymphood, when they become butterflies.

I felt Mr. Cumberland's folly so much, that his impertinence was lost on me. He has written an Ode, as he modestly calls it, in praise of Gray's Odes; charitably no doubt to make the latter taken notice of. Garrick read it the other night at Mr. Beauclerk's, who comprehended so little what it was about, that he desired Garrick to read it backwards, and try if it would not be equally good; he did, and it was. I came in just afterwards; and the conversation continuing, Garrick said, with all the candour he could affect, 'I wonder at it, but people cry down Mr. Mason's *Life of*

[2] That of 'sovereign of the grand American empire.' Mason had been told that George III had so styled himself in a treaty for obtaining foreign troops to be employed in the American war.

[3] The man-of-war *Fowey*, to which Lord Dunmore withdrew in June 1775, in consequence of the riots and disaffection in Virginia, where he was Governor.

Gray extremely; I really think it very ingenious.' I made him no more answer than he deserved. I broke through this rule two days ago on a new impertinence to myself. In the Paper Office there is a wight, called Thomas Astle, who lives like moths on old parchments. It was he who lent me the Coronation Roll, and to whom I communicated my book on *Richard III*, to every tittle of which he agreed. Some of the moths his *commensales* remonstrated to him I suppose, that he had fouled his own chrysalis by helping to unravel an intricate web. From that time I never saw him; on Monday he sent me a printed copy of the Act of Attainder of George, Duke of Clarence (which corroborates remarkably one of my arguments), but which he not perceiving, very impertinently added a quære, which implied I had been in the wrong. The quære itself was so absurd that I could not deny myself the pleasure of laughing at him and his council. I send you a copy of my letter[4] as the shortest way of explaining what I have told you, and because I conclude the foolish Society of Antiquaries will be convinced he had guessed happily, and that we shall have a new dissertation against me in the next volume of the *old women's logic*, as I call the *Archæologia*. I have reserved two or three more arguments, with which they shall be treated if they do attack me again, but with which I would not trust Astle, lest any one of the body should have sense enough to see their folly and stop them. You must excuse me, but some time or other I am determined to publish all my answers. I am offended for the honour of Richard's understanding, that all they charge him with tends to represent him as a drivelling fool, though indeed such are their understandings that they mean to prove he was an able knave.

[4] The letter to Astle already printed.

Fools! yes, I think all the world is turned fool, or was born so; *cette tête à perruque*, that wig-block the Chancellor, what do you think he has done? Burnt all his father's[5] correspondence with Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, &c.—why do you think? because several of the letters were indiscreet. To be sure he thought they would go and publish themselves, if not burnt, but indeed I suspect the indiscretion was that there were some truths which it was not proper to preserve, considering *considerandis*. That is just what I should like to have seen. There was otherwise so much discretion, and so little of anything else except hypocrisy in all the letters of those men that have appeared, that I should not so much regret what discreet folly has now burnt. Apropos, did I ever tell you a most admirable *bon mot* of Mr. Bentley? He was talking to me of an old devout Lady St. John, who burnt a whole trunk of letters of the famous Lord Rochester, 'for which,' said Mr. Bentley, 'her soul is now burning in heaven[6].' The oddness, confusion, and wit of the idea struck me of all things. I wish you good night.

1672. To John Robinson[1].

Sir,

I have but this minute received the honour of your most obliging letter, and do not lose a minute in answering it[2].

It is impossible to be more sensible than I am of Lord

[5] Allen, first Earl Bathurst. The letters from Pope were not destroyed.

[6] Lord Rochester's mother is probably the person referred to—Anne, daughter of Sir John St. John, first Baronet; m. (1) Sir Henry Lee, second Baronet, of Ditchley; (2) Henry Wilmot, Baron Wilmot, afterwards first Earl of Rochester.

Letter 1672.—Not in C.; reprinted from Lord Orford's *Works* (1798), vol. ii. pp. 384–5.

[1] Secretary to the Treasury.

[2] Robinson's letter was written in consequence of representations from the Commissioners of Customs, who were embarrassed by the absence from England of Sir Horace Mann, the successor of Edward Mann as Deputy Collector of Customs Inwards.

North's goodness, and I must beg you, Sir, to express my gratitude to his Lordship, as I shall have the honour of doing in person. His Lordship's condescension to me is as flattering as unmerited; and the only way I can at all pretend to deserve it is by doing what I ought; that is, as far as the case regards myself, prefer the public service to myself, and submit myself in the care of that interest to his Lordship's wisdom: at the same time having so just a sense of the duty of gratitude, that I think myself equally obliged by a kind offer, whether accepted or declined.

The Collectorship of the Customs is an office of such importance, that my family or I, who have received such favours from the government, ought to be the first to take care that the public suffers no detriment in an office in which we are concerned. I, it is true, have a great, though a temporary, interest in that office, but it is my brother, Sir Edward, in whom it is vested for his life; and therefore I flatter myself that both Lord North and you, Sir, will consider my answer as only regarding myself; for though I am persuaded that my brother has the public service full as much at heart as I have, I must not take upon me to answer for him about an office that virtually and ultimately rests in him. For myself I am persuaded that I cannot serve the public more essentially than by waiving my own interest entirely, and referring the whole disposition of the present difficulty to Lord North's discretion, and submitting myself entirely to what he shall direct. The situation of the office by the absence of Sir Horace Mann is certainly extremely momentous, and ought not to remain precarious; therefore, I beg very respectfully and gratefully too, that I may not be considered for an instant, but that his Lordship will give orders for the security of the office in whatever manner he thinks fit, till Sir Horace can come over and

accept it; and whatever his Lordship shall determine will be cheerfully acquiesced in by,

Sir,

His Lordship's and your most grateful
And most obedient humble servant,

Arlington Street, Dec. 25, 1775. HORACE WALPOLE.

POSTSCRIPT.

SIR,

I was so convinced that my brother Sir Edward prefers the service of the public to his own interest, at least as much as I do, that I deferred sending my immediate answer till I had communicated it to my brother; and he authorizes me to say that he submits himself entirely to Lord North's arbitration for the safety of the office till Sir Horace Mann can be admitted to it according to the intention of the patent.

1673. To SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Dec. 26, 1775.

IT was very vexatious to be delivered from my own anxiety about you on Saturday last, and not to be able to remove your suspense till Tuesday. I hope, however, that the conclusion of my last week's letter diminished your apprehensions of being wronged. I now confirm you in, and invest you with, your own estate. If your good-natured mind chooses to thank your brother for it, you may—for my part I don't believe a word of his having had power to deprive you of it—unless by some dishonourable flaw, which a generous mind would not think gives power. If he has done you justice, there is not a grain of benevolence thrown into the scale; for having (I don't know what he calls) laid out six thousand pounds on the estate, he leaves you charged with two hundred and sixty pounds annuity in

lieu of it. When one makes use of such a fraction of power, I do not much believe in the greatness of mind that resisted a greater temptation. Well, Linton is yours, and you are now your own master; I say nothing of particulars; there are few, and Mr. Croft[1] tells you them. Your nephew Sir Horace is not named in the will; the daughter was the object, and during her mother's life will have more than her brother. Croft thinks they will have 35,000*l.* apiece; I should think more. He calls your estate 1,500*l.* a year; I hope it is more; at least by an old rent roll made thirty years ago, it was then 1,200*l.* a year, and probably has risen or been increased above a fourth since that.

If you have been impatient for this letter, how anxious must I be too for your answer to my last! But you cannot hesitate to take possession of your estate, to see your country again after an absence of forty years, to see a sister you love, and friends I think you love too. Why do I doubt? I will not—I will flatter myself that you will fix here. Such long, faithful, and laborious services as yours cannot remain unrewarded. Sir James Porter[2], not so ancient a servant as you, has a pension of 1,000*l.* a year. Lord Sandwich and Mr. Mackenzie have always been your protectors; and if you have not made many other friends, never were amiable qualities so thrown away for forty years together—but what the deuce am I doing! Why do I doubt your coming?

Since I wrote last, public affairs are grown much more serious, and unpromising of any good issue. General Carleton has been beaten by the provincials[3], St. John's has surrendered to them, Quebec has probably[4] fallen into their hands, with the whole province of Canada. You may

LETTER 1673.—[1] The solicitor employed. *Walpole.*

[2] Who had been minister at Constantinople. *Walpole.*

[3] General Carleton had failed in an attempt to relieve St. John's, which capitulated on Nov. 3, 1775.

[4] The Americans laid siege to Quebec in December, but it was not taken by them.

call your neighbour the Pope an ungrateful old whore, for the Canadians joined the provincials. All this is certain; the rest seems to be credited; that our ships are destroying all the towns on the coast. This is horrible! and that the King's army could not stay in Boston, but was meditating retreat to Halifax. I don't at all warrant the last article of the bill of fare; but I may well say I see no prospect of good. Seeds of the last inveteracy sown! a whole continent to be reconquered! What lives, what money to be squandered! What damages, what breaches to be repaired! And reconciliation, how to be effected? by victories on our side, or on theirs? France is straining every nerve to repair their losses; we, every one to weaken ourselves; and weak we are to such a degree, that I hope France does not know it. Come and see us before it is worse.

The King referred to the Attorney-General the Duchess of Kingston's petition for a *noli prosequi*, and it was argued at the chambers of the Attorney. How many counsel do you think she had retained for that single preliminary?—a mob—only fourteen. She must be in a mortal panic; and the *noli prosequi* will not be granted. She has resumed her senses. The trial is fixed for the end of February. Madam of Babylon[5] and her Canadians are not in good odour; nay, I should not wonder if, like Jane Shore's friend Mrs. Blagrave, the old harlot should appropriate the entrusted jewels to her own use, when the Duchess is standing in a white sheet.

My last letter was so voluminous that it must compensate for this. How I long to have our correspondence finish! Your next, I conclude, will mention the passage of the Duke and Duchess[6] through Florence. Adieu!

[5] The Pope, in whose custody the Duchess of Kingston was said to have left her valuable effects at Rome. *Walpole.*

[6] Of Gloucester. *Walpole.*

1674. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Dec. 27, 1775.

Fresh, very fresh news! General Carleton is not come, but General Burgoyne is, though not yet landed in town. He is to bring very good accounts from Boston; but as he does not yet know what till he is told by those he is to tell, and as I am too scrupulous to send any news before it is born, you will excuse my mentioning the particulars.

We believe Quebec is perfectly safe, though we know to the contrary. Adam Smith told us t'other night at Beauclerk's, that Major Preston, one of two, but he is not sure which, would have been an excellent commander some years hence if he had seen any service. I said it was pity the war had not been put off till the Major should be some years older.

Lord Granby was married last night. He is selling an estate of 3,000*l.* a year that came to him by his mother[1], to pay his father's debts. I am afraid he will never sell himself.

Here are some verses of Soame Jenyns, that, in our present want of comfort, we admire very much, for we are out of spirits, and so was the poet, too, when he wrote the last stanza, which is insufferably bad. Pray return the piece, for I have no copy, and my amanuensis is in the country. There are some better verses[2] by Dean Barnard[3], of which I will procure a copy if I can. They are an answer to a gross brutality of Dr. Johnson, to which a properer answer would have been to fling a glass of wine in his face. I have

Letter 1674.—[1] His mother was a daughter of the 'proud' Duke of Somerset, and his father the popular Marquis of Granby.

[2] The verses do not appear. They are to be found in Dr. Birkbeck Hill's edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, vol. iv. pp. 431–3, App. A.

[3] Thomas Barnard, D.D. (1728–1806), Dean of Derry, 1769–80; Bishop of Killaloe, 1780–94; Bishop of Limerick, 1794–1806.

no patience with an unfortunate monster trusting to his helpless deformity for indemnity for any impertinence that his arrogance suggests, and who thinks that what he has read is an excuse for everything he says.

I told you, Madam, I might be busy if I would. I am so whether I will or not. The absence of Sir Horace Mann has embarrassed me, as he is not here to be admitted to the place which his brother held by patent for my brother and me. It involves me with the Treasury, but as I am the most respectful and cheapest person they can deal with, I have submitted everything to them, and only begged they will give me nothing for my pains,—which will content me at least. I shall go to Strawberry to-morrow, unless I hear their pleasure; and have told Mr. Fitzpatrick that I think of meeting him next week at Ampthill; but I don't tell your Ladyship so, for indeed I know nothing of the matter.

Just at present I suppose I am the vainest creature in the universe. Lady Di has drawn three scenes of my tragedy, which if the subject were a quarter as good as the drawings, would make me a greater genius than Shakespeare, as she is superior to Guido and Salvator Rosa. Such figures! such dignity! such simplicity! Then there is a cedar hanging over the castle, that is more romantic than when it grew on Lebanon!

Oh, if Lord Ossory has a farthing in the world to spare, he may buy a Madonna and Child, by Vandyke, at Christie's, for four thousand guineas, for which I would not give four hundred if I were as rich as General Scott. It is a fine picture, and yet I believe Vandyke was the father no more than Joseph.

1675. To Sir Horace Mann.

You must come to your friends; you cannot care for foolish Florentines, and weary you must be of travelling boys and their hoggish governors. Your sister Mrs. Foote is most amiable; Mr. Foote is good and reasonable; you like your nephew and Lady Lucy—here are relations and family for you, and I will think you wish to see *me*. The journey (not till winter is gone) will do you good; and if the climate should not equal that of Italy, you can but return. Come you must; it is impossible you should hesitate.

I shall go to Mr. Croft to-morrow, and if it is possible get him to send me an account of the will on Thursday, that I may receive it on Friday in time to write to you that night; though perhaps it may not be opened early enough on Thursday for him to save the post. If you do not hear from me till by Tuesday's post, you will conclude it was out of my power; and you must bear this suspense as calmly as you can. I would not have written under so much uncertainty, if your brother's death had not already appeared in the papers; and I would not fail to tell you as early as anybody.

I began my letter with trifling news, and have suffered you to read three pages of it, though an event of such importance awaited you. I will finish with public news more serious than the adventures of the Duchess-Countess.

The ministers received an account last night from Governor Tryon, that the provincials under Montgomery

Letter 1675.—Not in C.; now first printed from transcript in possession of Earl Waldegrave. At the beginning of the letter is the following note in Horace Walpole's writing:—'The following was part of the foregoing [the letter to Mann of Dec. 26, 1775], but may be reckoned a new letter, though by mistake I had thought a first part wanting.'

had entirely defeated General Carleton, cut to pieces all his Highlanders, and some say have taken the General himself[1]. Montgomery then summoned the commander of St. John's to surrender that place, as it would be in vain to hold out. The commander believed him and gave it up. It is supposed that Montreal and Quebec will soon follow. This is a great blow and will not be compensated by Lord Dunmore's having seized one of the deputies of the Congress, taken some old privateer cannon, and put to flight 200 provincials, he having but eighty men. However, a body of people, calling themselves Regulators, in Carolina, who are at war with the provincial governments, have promised assistance, if any of the King's forces make a descent. This I believe is a great motive to an armament going hence in two or three days to Virginia under Lord Cornwallis. I, who am no very good judge, have always thought the American war would be of long duration ; and if 200 *have* run away, the army besieging Boston and the body under Montgomery (an Irishman) have shown some spirit. A new bill now passing for destroying their ships will add new fuel to their rage ; and the commissioners for treating of peace, who are still talked of, will not find their minds in good temper, when provoked on one hand, and victorious on the other. How happy for us, that other countries allow us to prosecute our own quarrels at our ease!

I revert to you and your affairs, my dear Sir ; they are uppermost in my thoughts—yet there is so much selfishness in them, that I have but half merit in being impatient to send you the best news. I never named it to you, because it was not right or decent, but your brother was never very ill, without my indulging a secret hope of seeing you again. It is one in the morning, and I

[1] That part did not prove true. *Walpole.*

must go to bed, but I shall certainly dream you are come.

Tuesday, 3 o'clock.

I have been with Mr. Croft, and he has given me great satisfaction, though the will will not be opened till Friday morning, as your sister has summoned your nieces and their husbands to be present. I hinted darkly at your late brother having had some notion of the estate being in his power—'Oh, Sir,' said Mr. Croft, 'Mr. Mann was a prodigious honest man, and would not do anything wrong: he told me he could cut off the entail, but he would not, as it seemed to be his father's intention that it should go according to the entail'—to be sure he did; but I said nothing: I saw Mr. Croft did not understand the case, and I did not want to furnish an executor with any ill-founded difficulty. I begged he would write me a line as soon as he could—'Sir,' said he again, 'I dare to say Mr. Mann has given everything of his own, except a few legacies, to his two children; indeed I advised him to it, especially to the young lady, who is very deserving.' 'Sir,' replied I, 'I do not desire to know any particulars but about the estate, which I wish to be certain is to go to the two Sir Horaces. I have nothing to say against anything else that Mr. Mann may have thought proper to give to his children. I have always thought that when people have brought children into the world, they ought to make them as happy as they can, especially natural children, on whom they have heaped disadvantages.' 'You may depend upon it,' said Mr. Croft, 'that the entail is not cut off.'—Still I shall not be completely satisfied, my dear Sir, till I know it is yours without any trouble. You will smile perhaps at my suspicion, but as the boy is unhealthy, I conclude Mr. Croft intends to marry the girl to some relation of his own. This is only between you

and me; all the rest you may communicate to your nephew. Adieu! my mind is much more at ease than it was.

1676. To the Rev. William Cole.

Jan. 26, 1776.

I have deferred answering your last letter, dear Sir, till I cannot answer with my own hand. I made a pilgrimage at Christmas to Queen's Cross, at Ampthill, was caught there by the snow, imprisoned there for a fortnight, and sent home bound hand and foot by the gout. The pain, I suppose, is quite frozen, for I have had none; nothing but inflammation and swelling, and they abate. In reality, this is owing to the bootikins, which, though they do not cure the gout, take out its sting. You, who are still more apt to be an invalid, feel, I fear, this hyperborean season; I should be glad to hear you did not.

I thought I had at once jumped upon a discovery of the subject of the painted room at the Rose Tavern, but shall not plume myself upon my luck till I have seen the chamber, because Mr. Gough's account seems to date the style of the painting earlier than will serve my hypothesis. I had no data to go upon but the site having belonged to the family of Tufton (for I do not think the description at all answers to the taking of Francis I, nor is it at all credible that there should be arms in the painting, and yet neither those of France or Austria). I turned immediately to Lord Thanet's pedigree, in Collins's *Peerage*, and found at once an heroic adventure performed by one of the family[1], that accords remarkably with the principal circumstance. It is the rescue of the Elector Palatine,

Letter 1676. — [1] Hon. George Tufton, sixth son of second Earl of Thanet. He died in 1670 from wounds received in the encounter mentioned by Walpole.

son of our Queen of Bohemia, from an ambuscade laid for him by the Duke of Lorrain. The arms, or and gules, I thought were those of Lorrain, which I since find are argent and gules. The argent indeed may be turned yellow by age, as Mr. Gough says he does not know whether the crescent is red or black. But the great impediment is, that this achievement of a Tufton was performed in the reign of Charles II. Now in that reign, when we were become singularly ignorant of chivalry, anachronisms and blunders might easily be committed by a modern painter, yet I shall not adhere to my discovery, unless I find the painting correspond with the style of the modern time to which I would assign it; nor will I see through the eyes of my hypothesis, but fairly.

I shall now turn to another subject. Mr. Astle, who has left me off ever since the fatal era of Richard III, for no reason that I can conceive but my having adopted his discovery, which, for aught I know may be a reason with an antiquary, lately sent me the attainder of George, Duke of Clarence, which he has found in the Tower and printed; and on it, as rather glad to confute me and himself, than to have found a curiosity, he had written two or three queries which tended to accuse Richard of having forged the instrument, though to the instrument itself is added another, which confirms my acquittal of Richard of the murder of Clarence—but, alas! passion is a spying-glass that does but make the eyes of folly more blind. I sent him an answer, a copy of which I enclose. Since that, I have heard no more of him, nor shall, I suppose, till I see this new proof of Richard's guilt adopted into the annals of the Society, against which I have reserved some other stigmas for it.

Mr. Edmonson has found a confirmation of Isabella Fitz-Osbert having married Jernegan after Walpole. I

forget where I found my arms of Fitz-Osbert. Though they differ from yours of Sir Roger, the colours are the same, and they agree with yours of William Fitz-Osborne. There was no accuracy in spelling names even till much later ages; and you know that different branches of the same family made little variation in their coats.

I am very sorry for the death of poor Henshaw[2], of which I had not heard. I am yours most sincerely,

H. W.

P.S. The queries added to the letter to Mr. Astle were not sent with it; and, as I reserve them for a future answer, I beg you will show them to nobody.

1677. To Sir Horace Mann.

Jan. 28, 1776.

I am in so much haste now to have our correspondence end, that I no longer love even to write you a letter. My impatience to hear that you think of coming over is extreme—think of it!—I mean, to hear that you have fixed the time. Surely you can think of nothing else. Old Knight, the cashier[1], used to come once a year to Calais to look at the cliffs of England. You are not banished, as he was, but have been much longer absent. I will forgive any imprudence of impetuosity to come; take care I hear of no coldness. I am almost afraid to frighten you with an account of our winter; but then it is such a winter as I never saw. I was with you at Florence in 1741, and those ever since have been springs, and sometimes summers. This was made for the North Pole, has lasted three weeks,

[2] A young engraver.

Letter 1677.—[1] Robert Knight, cashier of the South Sea Company in the memorable year 1720. His son was created Lord Luxborough, and afterwards Earl of Catherlogh, and had an only son, who died before him, without issue. *Walpole.*

and grows every day worse and worse. It caught me at Lord Ossory's[2], in Bedfordshire, and locked me up there above a fortnight. At last it gave me the gout in both hands, on which I set out directly for London through mountains of snow and quarries of ice. I am still confined, though I have had very little pain; yet I write with difficulty, and ill-humour too, for I expected no gout this year.

By your silence, though you mention them at Rome, I find their Royal Highnesses my nephew and niece did not pass through Florence, for which I am not sorry. I have had a letter from the Duchess, who tells me the Pope has been a perfect knight-errant in courtesy and gallantry, and enjoined all manner of attentions to them from his college and nobility. It is not he that sent it to me, but I have had a red hat given to me to-day—it was Cardinal Wolsey's[3]. I am impatient to hear the result of Lady Orford's audience. I did not imagine she would ask it, as she was not content with the Duke[4] when he was last at Florence: I suppose she is proud of her *nepotism*.

The trial of the late Pope's friend, the Duchess of Kingston, is put off till April.

The government is straining every nerve to muster a great army in America, though it must combat for its very landing. Fifteen thousand Hessians and Brunswickers are retained. This force, if half of it can get thither and land, must be maintained from hence. We are not apt to be frugal about our armies abroad. Guess at the millions this will cost; and come and see your country before all its

[2] Ampthill. *Walpole.*

[3] 'The red hat of Cardinal Wolsey, found in the Great Wardrobe by Bishop Burnet when Clerk of the Closet. From his son the judge it came to the Countess Dowager of Albemarle, who gave it to Mr. Walpole.' (See *Description of Strawberry Hill.*)

[4] The Duke of Gloucester. *Walpole.*

splendour is at an end! Boston is famishing: what is the fate of Quebec, we do not yet know. The Parliament is met, but two-thirds of the members are frozen in the country. Omiah, the native of Otaheite, breakfasted with Mr. Conway to-day, and learns to skate. He had no notion of ice, and calls it *stone-water*; a very good expression. If he was in Ireland they would advise him to carry over some in spirits.

Shall you bring over a great many fine things for Linton? Shall you not regret all you have given to me? I would give them up to have you here. Don't you invite me to Linton? How long your letter is coming! Take care to know me when you see me. Expect me as wrinkled as Methuselem. Pray don't impute the change to thirty-five years and a tolerable quantity of gout, but to this hard winter. I assure you I looked charmingly a month ago. I have some spirits left still, and I wish I don't behave like a boy when we meet.

1678. To Edward Gibbon [1].

Mr. Walpole cannot express how much he is obliged to Mr. Gibbon for the valuable present he has received [2]; nor how great a comfort it is to him in his present situation, in which he little expected to receive singular pleasure. Mr. Walpole does not say this at random, nor from mere confidence in the author's abilities, for he has already (all his weakness would permit) read the first chapter, and it is in the greatest admiration of the style, manner, method, clearness, and intelligence. Mr. Walpole's impatience to proceed will struggle with his disorder, and give him such

Letter 1678.—[1] Edward Gibbon (1737–1794), the historian.

[2] The first volume of the *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*

spirits, that he flatters himself he shall owe part of his recovery to Mr. Gibbon; whom, as soon as that is a little effected, he shall beg the honour of seeing.

1679. To the Rev. William Mason.

Dear Sir, Arlington Street, Feb. 6.

I send you word as soon as I can that I received your charming letter very safely, but that is all I can do or say; and God knows when I shall be able to send you any other answer, for I am, and have been this week, confined to my bed with the gout in six or seven different places. As I never had it before in my leap year, I would suppose that it is owing now to the late bitter weather, for you see that even in my condition one can be fool enough to flatter oneself with some straw to the last. Adieu! I heartily wish you all I want, without envying you what I want.

Yours ever,

H. W.

1680. To Edward Gibbon.

Feb. 14, 1776.

After the singular pleasure of reading you, Sir, the next satisfaction is to declare my admiration. I have read great part of your volume, and cannot decide to which of its various merits I give the preference, though I have no doubt of assigning my partiality to one virtue of the author, which, seldom as I meet with it, always strikes me superiorly. Its quality will naturally prevent your guessing which I mean. It is your amiable modesty. How can you know so much, judge so well, possess your subject, and your knowledge, and your power of judicious reflection so thoroughly, and yet command yourself and betray no dictatorial arrogance of decision? How unlike

very ancient and very modern authors! You have, unexpectedly, given the world a classic history. The fame it must acquire will tend every day to acquit this panegyric of flattery. The impressions it has made on me are very numerous. The strongest is the thirst of being better acquainted with you; but I reflect that I have been a trifling author, and am in no light profound enough to deserve your intimacy, except by confessing your superiority so frankly, that I assure you honestly I already feel no envy, though I did for a moment. The best proof I can give you of my sincerity is to exhort you, warmly and earnestly, to go on with your noble work: the strongest, though a presumptuous mark of my friendship, is to warn you never to let your charming modesty be corrupted by the acclamations your talents will receive. The native qualities of the man should never be sacrificed to those of the author, however shining. I take this liberty as an older man, which reminds me how little I dare promise myself that I shall see your work completed! But I love posterity enough to contribute, if I can, to give them pleasure through you.

I am too weak to say more, though I could talk for hours on your *History*. But one feeling I cannot suppress, though it is a sensation of vanity. I think, nay, I am sure I perceive, that your sentiments on government agree with my own. It is the only point on which I suspect myself of any partiality in my admiration. It is a reflection of a far inferior vanity that pleases me in your speaking with so much distinction of that, alas! wonderful period, in which the world saw five good monarchs succeed each other. I have often thought of treating that Elysian era. Happily it has fallen into better hands!

I have been able to rise to-day for the first time, and flatter myself that if I have no relapse, you will in two or

three days more give me leave, Sir, to ask the honour of seeing you. In the meantime, be just; and do not suspect me of flattering you. You will always hear that I say the same of you to everybody. I am, with the greatest regard, Sir, &c.

1681. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, Feb. 15, 1776.

You have chilled me so thoroughly by the coldness of your answer, and by the dislike you express to England, that I shall certainly press you no more to come. I thought at least it would have cost you a struggle.

Your late brother, I allow, has used you very ill, and I dare to say, beyond his power. It is not at all probable that a tenant for life should have had power to charge the estate with what he laid out on the mansion house. His personal estate would be chargeable if he had let it go to ruin. If he improved it, it was at his own risk. Your nephew, whom you have prudently and kindly associated with yourself, will certainly take good advice for you and himself when he returns. I can say nothing on your brother Edward's first appanage, of which he has disposed; that must depend on the deeds executed by your father, when he assigned it. For the American estate, this is the first time I ever heard of it, and cannot judge.

Another part of your letter hurt me too very much. You say, even your brother Gal never did you any pecuniary service. Forgive me, but I had heard and believed that he had increased, at least managed so advantageously what money of yours he had in his hands, that at his death it amounted to seventeen thousand pounds, which I confess seemed to me more than you with your generosity could have saved out of your appointments. For the indifference of the rest of your family I heartily condemn it; but you

will not wonder that I combat for dear Gal's tenderness; and I will still hope that the insensibility of your last brother had given you a moment of humour, that I am sure did not last.

I must now speak on another subject, on which I have acted so disinterestedly for myself, and with such perfect regard for you, that I do not fear your imputing to the smallest personal concern the warm manner in which I pressed you to return instantly on your brother's death. Indeed I had not had time to know that your return would have been convenient to me: I wrote from my feelings, and had not another thought but the joy of seeing you once more—a thought I resign with infinite reluctance; though, as you will find by what I am going to say, your personal appearance is no longer necessary but to the satisfaction of my friendship.

Your late brother held for me and my brother our place in the Custom House; as you succeed to all his rights, the patent falls to you and is held in your name. The Commissioners of the Customs represented against your absence, and I was desired to give you notice. I peremptorily refused. I said I had acquainted you with your brother's death, and had pressed you to come over; but as I apprehended (as you saw) that you might plead your age, the fatigue of the journey, and change of climate, I was determined to await your answer, and nothing should induce me to urge you to come if you did not think it safe for your health. In the meantime, as the office could not stand still, Lord North very obligingly offered me to settle a deputation in any manner I should propose. That, too, I declined, and submitted the whole disposition to his Lordship's discretion. In one word, the Treasury have appointed Mr. Suckling, our cousin and deputy, to act for you till you come; which will be as long as you live,

unless Sir Edward dies first, when the patent expires—so that now you have no call, nor would your presence be the least necessary to my interest. I only believe that it will be necessary to demand your consent to this arrangement; and that is all the trouble you will have.

I have kept my bed for a fortnight with the gout in my limbs, and yesterday was the first of my rising; but it was after a sleep of eleven hours, which shows how excellent my constitution would be, if not harassed by the gout. I bear that affliction with patience—with patience, which my reflection has taught me is *the desperate substitute to hope*, and which does not delude one with such charming visions!

The Duke of Gloucester did me the honour of notifying to me the birth of his son[1]. It was most welcome intelligence, and saved me a month's anxiety for the Duchess, who I thought was likely to go a fortnight longer.

We have no news but those of preparations against America. I can add nothing to what you know I think on that subject.

Monsieur de Guisnes has been suddenly recalled—it is said on a successful cabal of his enemies; which, if so, bodes his total ruin. As his successor is not appointed, and there is a great armament at Toulon (though said to assist the Spaniards against Algiers), the stocks took fright, and expressed it: I don't know whether with reason; but can their panic be extremely premature? There is talk of Lord Stormont leaving his embassy for a post in Scotland, and of Sir Joseph Yorke replacing him at Paris.

Lady Mary Coke has returned some services at Paris, and many years of great attentions, with singular rudeness to me, since my return—but she is mad; and I suppose the birth of the Prince at Rome will send her to Bedlam[2].

LETTER 1681.—[1] Prince William Frederick (d. 1834); he succeeded his father as Duke of Gloucester in 1805.

[2] Lady Mary Coke had hoped to marry Edward, Duke of York, and

I think I have heard of the life of a modern visionary called *Marie* à la *Coque*[3], who fancied herself married to Jesus Christ; it would make a good parallel. Adieu! The accounts from Rome continue good.

1682. To the Rev. William Mason.

Feb. 18, 1776.

As my illness prevented my answering your delightful letter, I do not see why the leisure and solitude of convalescence should not be employed in replying to it; not poetically, for the current of the blood, frozen by age and chalkstoned by the gout, does not, though loosened from disease, flow over the smooth pebbles of Helicon. Mine, at best, were factitious rills that, like the artificial cascatelle of Hagley, played for moments to entertain visitors, and were not the natural bounty of the soil. *You* are forced to restrain your torrent, and the dykes of prudence must be borne down before it overflows the country. Not so Mr. Anstey; because his muddy mill-pool had in one point of view the roar and lustre of a cascade when it fell over a proper wheel, he thinks every pailful of its water, though soused down by a ploughman, has the same effect. His *Somersetshire Dialogue* is stupidity itself; you described it prophetically before you saw it.

Somebody or other has given us an epistle of another kind by the late Lord Melcombe;—not different from having more meaning, for Phœbus knows it has none at all, but so civil, so harmless, and so harmonious, that it is the ghost of one of Pope's tunes. How the puffy peer

hated the Duchess of Gloucester for having been more successful. On the death of the Duke of York, she tried ridiculously to make it believed that she had been married to him, but equally in vain. *Walpole.*

[3] Marguerite or Marie Alacoque (1647–1690), a nun of the order of the Visitation.

must have sweated when learning to sing of Pope, whom he could have strangled! The whole and sole drift of this cantata is to call Lord Bute 'Pollio,' and to beg to be his vicegerent upon earth. I should like to have heard Lord Bute asking Sir Harry Erskine who 'Pollio' was.

Mr. Whitehead has just published a pretty poem called *Variety*, in which there is humour and ingenuity, but not more poetry than is necessary for a Laureate; however, the plan is one, and is well wound up. I now pass to prose.

Lo, there is just appeared a truly classic work: a history, not majestic like Livy, nor compressed like Tacitus; not stamped with character like Clarendon; perhaps not so deep as Robertson's *Scotland*, but a thousand degrees above his *Charles*; not pointed like Voltaire, but as accurate as he is inexact; modest as he is *tranchant* and sly as Montesquieu without being so *recherché*. The style is as smooth as a Flemish picture, and the muscles are concealed and only for natural uses, not exaggerated like Michael Angelo's to show the painter's skill in anatomy; nor composed of the limbs of clowns of different nations, like Dr. Johnson's heterogeneous monsters. This book is Mr. Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. He is son of a foolish alderman, is a member of Parliament, and called a whimsical one because he votes variously as his opinion leads him; and his first production was in French[1], in which language he shines too. I know him a little, never suspected the extent of his talents, for he is perfectly modest, or I want penetration, which I know too, but I intend to know him a great deal more—there! there is food for your residence at York.

Do I know nothing superior to Mr. Gibbon? yes, but not

LETTER 1682.—[1] *Essai sur l'Étude de la Littérature*, begun in 1758, and finished in the following year.

what will entertain you at York; Mr. Gibbon's are good sense and polished art. I talk of great original genius. Lady Di Beauclerk has made seven large drawings in sut-water (her first attempt of the kind) for scenes of my *Mysterious Mother*. Oh, such drawings! Guido's grace, Albano's children, Poussin's expression, Salvator's boldness in landscape, and Andrea Sacchi's simplicity of composition might perhaps have equalled them had they wrought all together very fine. How an author's vanity can bestow bombast panegyric on his flatterers! Pray, Sir, when did I take myself for an original genius! Did not Shakespeare draw Hamlet from Olaus Ostrogothus, or some such name; did Le Sœur conceive the Chartreuse from any merit in the legend of St. Bruno? Seeing is believing, miracles are not ceased. I know how prejudiced I am apt to be; some time or other you will see whether I am so in this instance.

Now for specific answers to your queries; many of which answers will not be specific, for I know little more than if I were at York. I know nothing of Garrick's sale of patent, but I know forty stories of his envy and jealousy that are too long to tell you by mouth of pen; of a Monsr. le Texier, another real prodigy, who acts whole plays, in which every character is perfect—and pray observe he has not read *my* play. In sum, Garrick says when he quits the stage, he will read plays too, but they will be better than Monsr. Texier's (who only reads those of other authors), for he shall write them himself. This I know he has said twice. *Ex pede Herculem.* The Duchess of Kingston only knows whether she will be tried. The Earl's zeal against her was as marvellous to me as to you; I know reasons why he should have done the reverse, and cannot reconcile contradictions. Why should not Sayer's affair sleep? what, who is awake? For your hundred other queries which you have not put to

Lady Craven

from the painting by George Romney R. A.

me, I shall not attempt to guess them, not from idleness, but from the probable incapacity of my being able to answer them. The womb of time is big; we shall see whether she is delivered of mice or mountains.

One word about myself, and I have done. I know you disliked my answer to Dr. Milles[2], and I know I was angry both at him and Mr. Hume. The latter had acted very treacherously by the story I have hinted at of the Swiss reviewer[3]. Dr. Milles is a fool, who had been set on by Lord Hardwicke and that set, and at whom I have glanced. I have received many indirect little mischiefs from the Earl, who has of late courted me as much, and I have been civil to him. But my answers shall some time or other appear, when I only shall be blamed and my antagonists will be dead, and not hurt by them. For Mr. Masters, he is a dirty simpleton, who began by flattering me, and because I neglected him, joined the pack. The arguments in the answers are very essential to the question, and I shall not give myself the trouble of extracting the ridicule on the answerers, as they deserved it.

My hands you see are well, but I could not have written so long an epistle with my feet, which are still in their flannels. As my spirits always revive in proportion as pain subsides, I shall take the liberty (Sir Residentiary) to trespass on your decorum by sending you an impromptu I wrote yesterday, to pretty Lady Craven, who sent me an eclogue of her own, every stanza of which ended with *January*, and which she desired me not to criticize, as some

[2] See note on letter to Cole of Dec. 20, 1770.

[3] M. Deyverdun, a Swiss employed in the office of the Secretary of State, and a friend of Gibbon. He reviewed the *Historic Doubts* in *Mémoires Littéraires de la Grande Bretagne*. To this article were appended some remarks of Hume's on the same subject. These had already been submitted to and condemned by Horace Walpole, who objected to their publication and to the use made of them by the reviewer. (See Horace Walpole's *Short Notes of my Life*, under date of May 1769.)

of the rhymes were incorrect, a licence I adopted in my second line:

Though lame and old, I do not burn
With fretfulness to scare ye;
And charms and wit like yours would turn
To May my January.
The God who can inspire and heal
Sure breathed your lines, sweet Fairy,
For as I read, I feel, I feel,
I'm not quite January.

Probably you would have liked better to have the eclogue, but I had not leave to send it.

1683. To the Rev. William Mason.

Feb. 29, 1776.

My confinement has made me a great devourer of quartos. I am impatient to tell you what I have found in one as large as Mr. Gibbon's, not quite so excellent a work, nor so compressed, but which is not barren of entertainment, though the first sections to be sure are to me absolute Hebrew. This is Dr. Burney's [1] *History of Music*, a volume that I fear will a little interfere with my friend Sir John Hawkins's on the same subject.

I must begin with telling you that in page 168 the Doctor says he holds it impossible to be a great poet and a great musician too. Now, not to mention Gray, who (I believe, though I know nothing of music) was a great musician, how could he forget you whom he has not forgotten? for he has celebrated your harmonic knowledge in his notes, though I perceive he did not know that you are an *inventor* in the science, and have begotten a new instrument by the marriage of two others:—but to the point.

Letter 1683.—[1] Dr. Charles Burney (1726–1814).

Would you believe that the great Abyssinian, Mr. Bruce, whom Dr. B. made me laugh by seriously calling the *intrepid traveller*, has had the intrepidity to write a letter to the Doctor, which the latter has printed in his book; and in which he intrepidly tells lies of almost as large a magnitude as his story of the bramble, into which his Majesty of Abyssinia and his whole army were led by the fault of his general, and which bramble was so tenacious, that his Majesty could not disentangle himself without stripping to the skin and leaving his robes in it, and it being death in that country to procure or compass the sovereign's nudity, the general lost his head for the error of his march.

In short, Mr. Bruce has not only described six Abyssinian musical instruments, and given their names in the ancient Ethiopic, and in the court language, but contributed a Theban harp, as beautifully and gracefully designed as if Mr. Adam had drawn it for Lady Mansfield's [2] dressing-room, with a sphinx, masts, a patera, and a running foliage of leaves. This harp, Mr. Bruce says, he copied from a painting in fresco on the inside of a cavern near the ancient Thebes, and that it was painted there by the order of Sesostris, and he is not at all astonished at the miracle of its preservation, though he treats poor accurate Dr. Pococke with great contempt for having been in the cave without seeing this prodigy, which, however, graceful as its form is, Mr. Bruce thinks, was not executed by any artist superior to a sign-painter, yet so high was the perfection of the arts in the time of *Sesac*, that a common mechanic could not help rendering faithfully a common instrument. I am sorry our Apelles, Sir Joshua, has not the sign-

[2] Lady Elizabeth Finch (d. 1784), sixth daughter of sixth Earl of Winchilsea; m. (1738) Hon. William Murray, afterwards Earl of Mansfield, whose house, Caenwood, near Hampstead, was designed by the brothers Robert and James Adam.

painter's secret of making his colours last in an open cave for thousands of years.

It is unlucky that Mr. Bruce does not possess another secret reckoned very essential to intrepid travellers—a good memory. Last spring he dined at Mr. Crawfurd's: George Selwyn was one of the company. After relating the story of the bramble, and several other curious particulars, somebody asked Mr. Bruce if the Abyssinians had any musical instruments? 'Musical instruments!' said he, and paused —'yes, I think I remember one—lyre.' George Selwyn whispered his neighbour, 'I am sure there is one less since he came out of the country.' There are now six instruments there.

Remember this letter is only for your own private eye; I do not desire to be engaged in a controversy or a duel.

My gout is waning, and my ambition looks down to getting on a shoe in a few days. Mr. Stonhewer called on me yesterday, and I diverted him with what had just happened. Mr. Cambridge had been with me, and asked me if I knew the famous Beaumarchais[3], who is in England. I said, 'No, Sir, nor ever intend it.' 'Well, now,' said he, 'that is exactly my way: I made a resolution early never to be acquainted with authors, they are so vain and so *troublesome*.' I am persuaded he has got acquainted with Beaumarchais by this time. Adieu!

P.S. When you read Dr. Burney, pray observe in p. 256, in the notes, a quotation from Huet that exactly describes Bryant's *Ancient Mythology*.

[3] Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais (1732–1799).

1684. To the Rev. William Cole.

Arlington Street, March 1, 1776.

I am sorry to tell you that the curious old painting at the tavern in Fleet Street is addled, by the subject turning out a little too old. Alas! it is not the story of Francis I —but of St. Paul. All the coats of arms that should have been French and Austrian, and that I had a mind to convert into Palatine and Lorrain, are the bearings of Pharisaic nobility. In short, Dr. Percy was here yesterday, and tells me that over Mr. Gough's imaginary Pavia is written *Damascus* in capital letters. Oh, our antiquaries!

Mr. Astle has at last called on me, but I was not well enough to see him. I shall return his visit when I can go out, I hope this will be in a week; I have no pain left, but have a codicil of a nervous fever, for which I am taking the bark. I have nothing new for you in our old way, and therefore will not unnecessarily lengthen my letter, which was only intended to cashier the old painting, though I hear the Antiquaries still go on with having a drawing taken from it. Oh, our antiquaries!

1685. To the Rev. William Mason.

Arlington Street, March 11, 1776.

Venisti, vidi, vicisti! Your letter arrived on Saturday, General Conway came yesterday. Sir John Legard[1] will have ample credentials to Brunswick, for Mr. Conway is in friendship and correspondence with Prince Ferdinand, and Sir John will certainly have leave to go *after the review*, if officers are allowed to go abroad *at this time*. Thank you heartily for giving me this opportunity.

Mr. Cumberland has published two Odes, in which he

Letter 1685.—[1] Sixth Baronet, of Ganton, Yorkshire.

has been so bountiful as to secure immortality for Gray, for Dr. James's powder, and indeed for his own Odes, for Father Time would fall asleep before he could read them through. There is a dedication to Romney the painter, that hisses with the pertness of a dull man.

Bishop Keene wrote to me t'other day to know if I knew anything of a whole length of my father, that was to be sold by auction, and if I had any objection to his buying it[2]. Was this folly? or is it repentance, and he wants a memento to remind him that he cheated my father's daughter[3] of a living and of marriage?

I mentioned this to my nephew the Bishop of Exeter just now, who told me that when Mr. Grenville was turned out (who had offered my Lord of Ely the Primacy of Ireland), he sent for the person who had brought him the offer, and desired him to tell Mr. Grenville that he should always acknowledge the obligation; but that, as Mr. Grenville was now out, he thought it right (perhaps he said, honest) to tell him that his Lordship must look up to the King, and to *whomever* his Majesty should make his minister.

The Duke of Wirtemburg[4] is arrived with a mistress, whom he got made Countess of the Empire. The Queen of France would not receive her: she has been received at court here; the man who keeps the *hôtel garni* in Covent Garden would not lodge her for the reputation of his house.

Here is a new epigram from France:

Quelqu'un, dit-on, a peint Voltaire
Entre la Beaumelle et Fréron;
Cela feroit un vrai Calvaire
S'il n'y manquoit le bon larron.

[2] It was bought by Lord Hertford.

[3] Mrs. Daye; see note on letter to Mann of Dec. 11, 1752.

[4] Charles Eugene, Duke of Würtemberg; d. 1793. His mistress (to whom he was married in 1786) was a Countess von Hohenhain.

Voltaire himself has written a little poem called *Sesostris*, which I do not send you, for it is only the worn-out choice of Hercules.

P.S. I have often thought of a thing, and which, as you are now at York I will mention, and beg you to suggest to Peckitt. You know he and all the modern glass-painters cannot recover the fine ancient reds and greens. How is that possible, when every necklace-shop sells false rubies and emeralds, which jewellers must take out of the setting. To be sure they are not true! and what are those counterfeits but coloured glass? Pray too, could not Peckitt sketch the exact faces of Henry IV and Richard III from their statues on the screen of your cathedral? I would pay him for them.

1686. To Sir Horace Mann.

March 22, 1776.

I have been so long confined, as I am still, that with a dearth of public events, I have been little disposed to write. My gouts, as they never attack my head or stomach, are not alarming. One believes they protract one's life, but they certainly undermine its vigour and its comforts. They reckon this winter unfavourable to that disorder, and I certainly have seen several co-patients who complain of the slowness of their recovery. My common sense tells me that repeated attacks and increasing years must diminish the powers of recovery. If my companions are more sanguine, they flatter themselves, or say they do.

We know nothing new from America, since the general belief that the attempt on Quebec has failed by the death of Montgomery[1], who was not so fortunate as Wolfe, to die

Letter 1686.—[1] General Richard Montgomery, killed in an attack on Quebec on Dec. 31, 1775.

a conqueror, though very near being so. No authentic accounts are come from thence. In truth, the want of communication, but to the Government, bolstered up by an infinitude of lies, renders everything one hears problematic. However, had the ministers any good news, they would be eager enough to divulge it. The season is far advanced, yet their expeditions are much behindhand, and the troops that do go will arrive during the dangerous heats. Indeed, I do not think the general language is so prophetic of certain success as it was three months ago, and people seem to grow much more clear of the unpromising state of affairs than they were.

What else can I tell you? That dissipation and gaming continue to stride before the war? Yes, verily. A new club is opened in St. James's Street, that piques itself on surpassing all its predecessors. But this is almost commonplace. The Duke of Wirtemberg, who has wasted revenues enough to be worthy to be of it, is here, but *here* is no phenomenon.

A senator of Rome, while Rome survives,

can continue to waste as much in one evening as a German prince in an opera for a season. But it is the nation that is really gaming deep—we have set twelve provinces on the cast of a die. The Duke of Chartres[2], they say, is coming to the University of Newmarket. Different philosophers, in different ages, visit different nations for different kinds of lore. Our crocodiles are not the same with those of Egypt.

The Duke and Duchess[3] seem much pleased with Rome. I hope their villa is not within the precincts of the malaria.

[2] Afterwards the notorious Duke of Orléans. *Walpole.*
[3] Of Gloucester.

I did hear the report of the separation of the Cowpers, but not knowing them, never thought about them. To tell you the truth, the Earl [4], I conclude, is a madman; therefore, I wonder he does *not* come home. Our Countess [5], I am told, has bought an estate; is it in Tuscany or Naples?

I can only repeat what I told you, that I am persuaded the mortgage saddled on you was a stretch of power. For the other articles, they must depend on deeds.

Everybody is on the quest for tickets for the Duchess of Kingston's trial. I am persuaded her impudence will operate in some singular manner. Probably she will appear in weeds with a train to reach across Westminster Hall, with mourning Maids of Honour to support her when she swoons at her dear Duke's name, and in a black veil to conceal her not blushing. To this farce, novel and curious as it will be, I shall not go. I think cripples have no business in crowds but at the Pool of Bethesda; and to be sure, this is no angel that troubles the waters.

I have nothing to add but an excellent *bon mot* of Wilkes's yesterday, on Lord George Germaine. The former had moved for a more equal representative, from the natural objection to the small boroughs. Two of them, indeed, he owned, had the merit of sending two great ministers; Banbury, which chooses Lord North; and East Grinstead, that furnishes an heroic Secretary of State, who might conquer America, though, he believed, it would not be in *Germany* [6]. Adieu!

[4] Earl Cowper. *Walpole.*

[5] The Countess of Orford. *Walpole.*

[6] Alluding to the battle of Minden, where Lord George Germaine was disgraced for not leading up the Blues. Lord Chatham boasted of having conquered America in Germany. *Walpole.*

1687. To Dr. Gem[1].

Arlington Street, April 4, 1776.

It is but fair, when one quits one's party, to give notice to those one abandons—at least, modern patriots, who often imbibe their principles of honour at Newmarket, use that civility. You and I, dear Sir, have often agreed in our political notions; and you, I fear, will die without changing your opinion. For my part, I must confess I am totally altered; and, instead of being a warm partisan of liberty, now admire nothing but despotism. You will naturally ask what place I have gotten, or what bribe I have taken? Those are the criterions of political changes in England—but, as my conversion is of foreign extraction, I shall not be the richer for it. In one word, it is the *Rélation du Lit de Justice*[2] that has operated the miracle. When two ministers[3] are found so humane, so virtuous, so excellent, as to study nothing but the welfare and deliverance of the people; when a King listens to such excellent men; and when a Parliament, from the basest, most interested motives, interposes to intercept the blessing, must I not change my opinions, and admire arbitrary power? or can I retain my sentiments without varying the object?

Yes, Sir, I am shocked at the conduct of the Parliament—one would think it was an English one! I am scandalized at the speeches of the *Avocat Général*[4], who sets up the odious interests of the nobility and clergy against the cries and groans of the poor; and who employs his wicked eloquence to tempt the good young monarch, by personal

Letter 1687.—[1] An English physician long settled at Paris, no less esteemed for his professional knowledge, than for his kind attention to the poor who applied to him for medical assistance. *Walpole.*

[2] The first *lit de justice* held by Louis XVI. *Walpole.*

[3] Messrs. de Malesherbes and Turgot. *Walpole.*

[4] Monsieur de Séguier. *Walpole.*

views, to sacrifice the mass of his subjects to the privileges of the few—But why do I call it eloquence? The fumes of interest had so clouded his rhetoric, that he falls into a downright Iricism.—He tells the King that the intended tax on the proprietors of land will affect the property not only of the rich, but of the poor. I should be glad to know what is the property of the poor? Have the poor landed estates? Are those who have landed estates the poor? Are the poor that will suffer by the tax the wretched labourers who are dragged from their famishing families to work on the roads?—But *it is* wicked eloquence when it finds a reason, or gives a reason for continuing the abuse. The Advocate tells the King those abuses are *presque consacrés par l'ancienneté*; indeed, he says all that can be said for nobility, it is *consacrée par l'ancienneté*; and thus the length of the pedigree of abuses renders them respectable!

His arguments are as contemptible when he tries to dazzle the King by the great names of Henri Quatre and Sully, of Louis XIV and Colbert, two couple whom nothing but a mercenary orator would have classed together. Nor, were all four equally venerable, would it prove anything. Even good kings and good ministers, if such have been, may have erred; nay, may have done the best they could. They would not have been good, if they wished their errors should be preserved, the longer they had lasted.

In short, Sir, I think this resistance of the Parliament to the adorable reformation planned by Messrs. de Turgot and Malesherbes is more phlegmatically scandalous than the wildest tyranny of despotism. I forget what the nation was that refused liberty when it was offered. This opposition to so noble a work is worse. A whole people may refuse its own happiness; but these profligate magistrates

resist happiness for others, for millions, for posterity!—Nay, do they not half vindicate Maupeou, who crushed them? And you, dear Sir, will you now chide my apostasy? Have I not cleared myself to your eyes? I do not see a shadow of sound logic in all Monsieur Séguier's speeches, but in his proposing that the soldiers should work on the roads, and that passengers should contribute to their fabric; though, as France is not so luxuriously mad as England, I do not believe passengers could support the expense of the roads. That argument, therefore, is like another that the Avocat proposes to the King, and which, he modestly owns, he believes would be impracticable.

I beg your pardon, Sir, for giving you this long trouble; but I could not help venting myself, when shocked to find such renegade conduct in a Parliament that I was rejoiced had been restored. Poor human kind! is it always to breed serpents from its own bowels? In one country, it chooses its representatives, and they sell it and themselves; in others, it exalts despots; in another, it resists the despot when he consults the good of his people! Can we wonder mankind is wretched, when men are such beings? Parliaments run wild with loyalty, when America is to be enslaved or butchered. They rebel, when their country is to be set free! I am not surprised at the idea of the devil being always at our elbows. They who invented him no doubt could not conceive how men could be so atrocious to one another, without the intervention of a fiend. Don't you think, if he had never been heard of before, that he would have been invented on the late partition of Poland! Adieu, dear Sir.

Yours most sincerely,

Hor. Walpole.

1688. To the Rev. William Mason.

April 8, 1776.

You find Circe and Alma Mater are too powerful. Perhaps they are in alliance. *Il faut cultiver son jardin*—you must stick to your garden.

There is Dr. Chandler[1] who was sent by the Dilettanti too, and has just published his *Travels in Greece*. They are rather travels in Pausanias, for he does little but tell us what Pausanias found worth seeing there. Except that, which is no merit, the book is ill-written and unsatisfactory; and yet he revived my visions towards Athens, and made me wish I was a great king and could purchase to restore it: a great king probably would hold it cheaper to conquer it. This Dr. Chandler, as if to avenge his namesake, flirts at Gray for having clothed 'Delphi's barren steep' with woods, and converted Meander's muddy waves into amber, as if amber did not poetically imply the same. I don't wonder, with so little taste, he has written no better.

I bought yesterday a poem in blank verse called *Amwell*, by a John Scott[2], Esq.; it is a pious design to immortalize a village in which John Scott, Esq., lives. I only mention it for one grand and beautiful image which struck me extremely:—

> oft Fancy's ear,
> Deep in the gloom of evening woods, has heard
> The last sad sigh of Autumn, when his throne
> To Winter he resign'd.

It puts me in mind of that sublime passage in Dyer's *Ruins of Rome*:—

> hears the voice of Time
> Disparting towers.

Letter 1688.—[1] Richard Chandler, D.D. (1738–1810).
[2] John Scott (1730–1783), a Quaker.

I don't know whether you are much acquainted with my Swiss footman, David? Well! he does not think there is so great a prince in the world as I. Yesterday as I came to breakfast, he told me coolly the Duke of Wirtemburg had called at eight o'clock and wanted a ticket for Strawberry Hill. 'Bless me!' said I, 'and what did you say?' 'I told his Grace you was not awake, and bad him come again at ten.' 'Good God!' said I, 'tell him to call again! don't you know he is a Sovereign Prince?' 'No, I did think he was only a common Duke!' I could not help laughing, though I was so shocked. In short, he had called again, and had again been sent away, nor can David yet conceive that I was to be waked. I was forced to write a thousand lies and excuses, and swear I was bedrid with the gout, and could not pay my duty to his Serene Highness, and upon the whole was very glad for being reduced to plead the gout. I sent Philip to show my house, and persist in my crippletude, which in truth is still so fresh, that it would all have revived, if I must have walked or stood two hours to show his Serenity the tombs.

They are translating Shakespeare in France, and *Othello* is so well done, that it has incredible success. The Abbé Barthélemi, a very good judge and no partialist to England, desired Madame du Deffand to tell me he finds Shakespeare *supérieur à tout et qu'il me prioit de ne regarder que le dieu et de ne pas faire attention à l'homme.* This is a strong proof that both the Abbé and the translators understand Shakespeare, but what will they do with Falstaff?—impossible, unless they are as able as Townley[3], who translated *Hudibras* so admirably, which before seemed the most impracticable of all achievements.

Is not your residence nearly exhausted, and don't you

[3] John Towneley (1697–1782); his translation of the first canto of *Hudibras* was published anonymously in 1757 at Paris.

intend coming southward? Am not I to harbour you? You shall be troubled with no Serene Highnesses, nor have I wasted all my budget in my letters; Lady Di's drawings alone are worth a pilgrimage,—ask Mr. Palgrave, who has seen them.

P.S. I have made a blunder, which will have puzzled you. I recollect it was a Dr. Chapman, not Dr. Chandler, who made so good an end by choking himself with mackerel.

1689. To the Rev. William Mason.

Eve of St. Elizabeth of Kingston,
Strawberry Hill.

I will not trouble you for a cast of King Richard's face, since there is no such thing; nor of King Henry's, since it has lost its mouth. I am grown such an antiquity myself, and have so little time left to satisfy my fancies, that I willingly contract them within as narrow a compass as I can; yet you commission me to send you journals of the Duchess's trial, as if I was to be there! My curiosity would certainly carry me thither sooner almost than to any show upon earth. I have known her from five years old, and seen her in all her stages, but I am not well enough to attend this last act of her drama—possibly may never go to a public place again, having a strong notion of the propriety of seceding, and not trailing one's weaknesses into the world, when age and illness have told one to retire. Thus you must expect no ocular accounts from me, perhaps nothing better than the newspapers would tell you, except with a little more authenticity.

Tuesday, April 16.

The Duchess-Countess has raised my opinion of her

understanding, which was always but at low ebb; for she has behaved so sensibly and with so little affectation, that her auditory are loud in applause of her. She did not once squall, scream, or faint, was not impudent, nor gorgeous, looked well though pale and trembling; was drest all in black, yet in silk, not crape; with no pennon hoisted but a widow's peak. She spoke of her innocence and of her awe of so venerable an assembly. Yesterday passed in the pleading of her counsel against a second trial, urging the finality of the ecclesiastic sentence. I should think no more would be done to-day than hearing the reply of the prosecutor's counsel.

A previous incident was more entertaining than any part of the piece; the *Grand Seneschal*[1] invited the Duke of Wirtemburg to dinner by a card, and translated it neither into law Latin nor Norman French. By the help of Boyer's *Dictionary* it began *Le haut Intendant envoie ses compliments*, &c. He ordered everybody to be uncovered while the King's commission was being read, and then sat down himself and put on his hat.

Lord Nuneham has just been here, not attending his friend through all her course. She lay at home (or, according to the chaste modern phrase, *slept* there), and the Usher of Black Rod slept in the next room. My journals are short, but you shall have the sequel. Adieu!

P.S. I this minute receive a letter from poor Mr. Granger's nephew, to tell me his uncle was seized, at the communion table, on Sunday, with an apoplectic fit, and died yesterday morning at five o'clock. He was a good man as ever lived.

2nd P.S. Thurlow, Wedderburn, and Dunning have

LETTER 1689. — [1] Earl Bathurst, who acted as High Steward at the Duchess's trial.

answered the Duchess's counsel, and then the Lords adjourned till Friday; so at soonest you will hear again by Saturday's post.

1690. To the Rev. William Cole.

April 16, 1776.

You will be concerned, my good Sir, for what I have this minute heard from his nephew, that poor Mr. Granger was seized at the communion table on Sunday with an apoplexy, and died yesterday morning at five. I have answered the letter with a word of advice about his MSS., that they may not fall into the hands of booksellers. He had been told by idle people so many gossiping stories, that it would hurt him and living persons if all his collections were to be printed; for as he was incapable of telling an untruth himself, he suspected nobody else—too great goodness in a biographer.

Yours ever,
H. W.

P.S. The whole world is occupied with the Duchess of Kingston's trial. I don't tell you a word of it, for you will not care about it these two hundred years.

1691. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, April 17, 1776.

I opened your letter of the 2nd with trembling, for the Duchess of Gloucester had told me, with great concern, the danger of Lady Lucy[1]. As she was still alive, and your nephew thought her in less danger, I will venture to

Letter 1691.—[1] Lady Lucy Noel, wife of Sir Horace Mann the younger. *Walpole.*

hope she is safe, because I wish it so much for all your sakes; but I shall be very impatient for another letter, and to hear you yourself are better.

You may think of America, if you please; but we think and talk but of one subject, the solemn comedy that is acting in Westminster Hall. Deep wagers had been laid that the Duchess-Countess[2] would decamp before her trial. This, with a million of other stories, have been so spread, that I am determined to believe no one fact but what I shall read in the printed trial; for at it I have not been, though curious enough about so august a mummery, and so original a culprit; but I am too little recovered to encounter crowds.

The scene opened on Wednesday with all its pomp, and had drawn hither even a Countess Castiglione, from Milan. The doubly-noble prisoner went through her part with universal admiration. Instead of her usual ostentatious folly, and clumsy pretensions to cunning, all her conduct was decent, and even seemed natural. Her dress was entirely black and plain; her attendants not too numerous, her dismay at first perfectly unaffected. A few tears balanced cheerfulness enough; and her presence of mind and attention never deserted her. This rational behaviour, and the pleadings of her four counsel, who contended for the finality of the Ecclesiastical Court's sentence against a second trial, carried her triumphantly through the first day, and turned the stream much in her favour.

Yesterday was less propitious. The Attorney and Solicitor-Generals[3], and Dunning, refuted the Duchess's counsel, made a very contrary impression, and seemed to have unhinged some of her firmness. She was blooded as soon as she retired, fell into a great passion of tears, and is, or

[2] Elizabeth Chudleigh, Countess of Bristol, married during the Earl's life to the last Duke of Kingston. *Walpole.*

[3] Thurlow and Wedderburn.

affects to be, very ill. However, the Lords have given her and themselves a respite of two days. On Friday the opinion of the judges is to be asked on her plea against a second trial, which, it is not doubted, will be overruled. All the future is uncertainty; whether she will be sent back to the Ecclesiastic Court, or whether the Lords will proceed to trial—either of which would produce deep probing into her history; or whether, to avoid either, she will not plead guilty as soon as the Ecclesiastic Court's decisive jurisdiction is set aside. In fact, this is as much the trial of the Ecclesiastic Court as of the prisoner; and may, at least ought to, produce a reform of that Popish tribunal. The Earl of Bristol[4] does not stand in a fairer predicament; and is not the whole burlesque, when, except the foreigners, there could not be one person in the Hall who was not as much convinced of the bigamy as of their own existence? But the world can make *laws* against crimes, till nobody knows whether there is any crime which may not be committed *legally*.

I now submit to recall my thoughts to America, for the sake of you Italians and little states, who do not know how superior fashion is in a great nation to national interests. You need not be too impatient for events. The army that was to overrun the Atlantic continent is not half set out yet; but it will be time enough to go into winter quarters. What we have heard lately thence is not very promising. The Congress, that was said to be squabbling, seems to act with harmony and spirit; and Quebec is not thought to be so safe as it was a month ago. However, that is the business of the ministers; nobody else troubles his head about the matter. Few people knew much of America

[4] Augustus John Hervey, Earl of Bristol. He had never avowed his marriage with Miss Chudleigh, and was supposed to have connived for a sum of money at her marrying the Duke. *Walpole.*

before; and now all communication is cut off, and the administration does not think itself bound to chant its own disappointments, or the praises of the enemy, we forget it as much as if Columbus had not routed it out of the ocean.

Who thought of Mrs. Pitt[5] rising again at Pisa? I was told she was in Provence, and imagined her on her return. But who can calculate the motions of such eccentric heads as the English? My dear countrymen and women are—very sensible.

I return to poor Lady Lucy and you and your nephew. How I wish you all at ease about her! Pray, too, be assured I acquiesce in all you say on your own return, though grieved at your resolution, and more so at the necessity you find in adhering to it. It is not my disposition to prefer my own pleasures to the welfare of my friends. Your return might have opened a warm channel of affection, which above thirty years could not freeze; but I am sure you know my steadiness too well to suspect me of cooling to you, because we are both grown too old to meet again. I wished that meeting, as a luxury beyond what old age seldom tastes; but I am too well prepared for parting with everything, to be ill-humouredly chagrined because one vision fails. Visions are the consolation of life; it is wise to indulge them, unless one builds on them as realities. Our dreams are almost at an end! Mine are mixed with pain; yet I think it does not make me peevish. I accept with thankfulness every hour in which I do not suffer. I am not at all impatient for the moment that will terminate both anguish and cheerfulness, and I endeavour to form my mind to resigning the first with gratitude, and the latter with easy submission. Adieu!

[5] Mrs. Anne Pitt, sister of William, Earl of Chatham. *Walpole.*

1692. To the Rev. William Mason.

April 20, 1776.

Your obedient journalist proceeds. He might plead a headache; but as that is generally pleaded when not felt, a real one must not be disgraced by being turned into an excuse, especially by so sacred a minister of truth—as a newswriter.

The plot thickens, or rather opens. Yesterday the judges were called on for their opinions, and *unâ voce* dismantled the Ecclesiastic Court, which has not been treated with much respect by the Common Law. The Attorney-General then detailed the life and adventures of Elizabeth Chudleigh, *alias* Hervey, *alias* the most high and puissant Princess the Duchess of Kingston. Her Grace bore the narration with a front worthy of her exalted rank. Then was produced the capital witness, the ancient damsel who was present at her first marriage and tucked her up for consummation. To this witness the Duchess was benign, but had a transitory swoon at the mention of her dear Duke's name; and at intervals has been blooded enough to have supplied her execution if necessary. Two babes were likewise proved to have blessed her first nuptials, one of which for aught that appears may exist and become Earl of Bristol. The gallant and faithful Earl of Hillsborough used all his prowess to cross-question and browbeat the deponent, but her Grace's other champion, Lord Mansfield, did not enter the lists. The court is now hearing the other witnesses. I have forsworn prophecy, and therefore tell you no particulars of what is to come. If I hear anything in time this evening of the events of the day, you shall know; if not, good night.

P.S. It is near seven, and the trial is not over. I must

go out and learn anecdotes, and cannot come home before the post goes out; so you must have patience till next week.

1693. To the Rev. William Mason.

Sunday, April 21, 1776.

I have an half-hour to spare, and employ it to continue the trial, which will not be finished before Tuesday evening, when I shall certainly neither have collected the sequel, nor have time to write it, as I am to dine at the Royal Academy.

Friday and Saturday have produced so much against the Duchess-Countess, that she must have been distracted to have sought the trial, or not poisoned the witnesses. The judges quashed the Ecclesiastic Court as summarily as Luther could have done; and Thurlow has given an Atalantis of her Grace's adventures, confirmed by evidence. A maid has appeared who was present at her first marriage and almost at its consummation. Serjeant Hawkins has authenticated the birth of at least one child; and the widow of the parson who married her, and on whom she forced a fictitious register, when she expected the late Lord Bristol's death, and had a mind to be a Countess, has deposed, that though privy to all these circumstances, visiting the new *Duchess*, the latter said to her, 'Mrs. Phillips, was not the Duke very good to marry an old maid?' Both these women her avarice had turned against her. Lord Barrington, subpœnaed against her, after taking the oath, declared he would betray no confidential secrets. The Lords were going to hang him for perjury, but thought better on it, lest a quarrel between the two Houses should prove favourable to America. His Lordship faltered as well as they did; told more than he had declared he would not tell, and yet prevaricated; but for this

interlude you must wait for the printed trial, as I cannot relate it accurately.

To-morrow the Duchess makes her defence; and on Tuesday the Lords give sentence. She has not preserved the philosophy of the first day, but abused the first female evidence while giving testimony. Lord Mansfield left the Ecclesiastical Court in the lurch; his cowardice always supplanting his knavery. Adieu! you shall know the sequel by Wednesday or Thursday's post.

P.S. When does your residence conclude? and when do you come to Strawberry Hill?

1694. To the Rev. William Mason.

April 23, 1776.

If you expect a long letter, you will be disappointed; if you are tired of my letters, you will be released. The wisdom of the land has been exerted five days in turning a Duchess into a Countess, and does not think it a punishable crime for a Countess to convert herself into a Duchess. After a paltry defence and an oration of fifty pages, which she herself had written and pronounced well, the sages, in spite of the Attorney-General, who brandished a hot iron, dismissed her with the simple injunction of paying her fees; all voting her guilty, the Duke of Newcastle softening his vote with *erroneously, not intentionally*. So ends that solemn farce! which may be indifferently bound up with the State Trials and *The History of Moll Flanders*. If you write to her you must direct to the Countess of Bristol. The Earl, they say, does not intend to leave her that title, nor the house of Meadows a shilling, but there will be quæres to both designs. The Ecclesiastic Court, full as guilty as the culprit, I dare to say, will escape as well.

Adieu! allow that I have obeyed you implicitly. I am glad to have done with her.

1695. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, April 24, 1776.

I WRITE again so soon, because I owe you the sequel of the trial. If the Pope expects his Duchess back, he must create her one, for her peers have reduced her to a Countess. Her folly and obstinacy now appear in their full vigour; at least her faith in the Ecclesiastic Court, trusting to the infallibility of which she provoked this trial, in the face of every sort of detection. A living witness of the first marriage, a register of it fabricated long afterwards by herself, the widow of the clergyman who married her, many confidants to whom she had trusted the secret, and even Hawkins the surgeon, privy to the birth of her child, appeared against her. The Lords were tender, and would not probe the Earl's collusion; but the Ecclesiastical Court, who so readily accepted their juggle, and sanctified the second match, were brought to shame: they care not, if no reformation follows. The Duchess, who could produce nothing else of consequence in her favour, tried the powers of oratory, and made a long oration, in which she cited the protection of her late mistress[1]. Her counsel would have curtailed this harangue, but she told them they might be good lawyers, but did not understand speaking to the passions. She concluded her rhetoric with a fit, and the trial with rage, when convicted of the bigamy. The

LETTER 1695.—[1] Miss Chudleigh had been Maid of Honour to the Princess Dowager of Wales, and remained so long after she was married to Mr. Hervey, but the marriage was not owned. As she married the Duke of Kingston, without being a widow, the enigmatic epitaph of *Aelia Laelia Crispus, nec Virgo, nec Mulier, nec Vidua, sed Omnia*, was applied to her by the author of these letters. *Walpole.*

Attorney-General laboured to have her burnt in the hand, but the judges were hustled into an opinion against it, and it was waived. So all this complication of knavery receives no punishment, but the loss of the Duchy; unless the civil courts below are more severe than the supreme tribunal; and thither her antagonists intend to resort. The Earl's[2] family have talked loudly of a divorce; but if it is true that he has given her a bond of thirty thousand pounds not to molest her, and that this bond is in Lord Barrington's hands, either she will recriminate, and collusion proved prevents a divorce; or his silence will speak the collusion. I am heartily tired of this farce, having heard of nothing else this fortnight. Happily, in this giant town one is not long troubled with stale events. Did I tell you that a Madame Castiglione came on purpose from Milan for this show?

As I have heard no more from you of Lady Lucy, I flatter myself that all danger is over. I shall like to have it confirmed.

There is a report to-day that Spain has made free with Jamaica, and taken it. I do not believe it; but it is certain that America furnishes administration with no good news. Fifteen thousand of the destined troops are not yet sailed thither.

I have just met with your name in a printed book, in which your politeness is celebrated. It is called *Letters from Italy by an Englishwoman.* This is a Mrs. Miller, whom perhaps you recollect. Ten years ago I knew her and her husband, the faithful companion of her travels, at Bath, near which they have a small house and garden, in a beautiful spot called Bath-Easton. They were mighty civil simple people, living with her mother, Mrs. Riggs, a rough kind of English humourist. They ran out their

[2] The Earl of Bristol.

fortune, and all went to France to repair it. In France the mother was left with the grandchildren, while the fond pair resorted to Italy. Thence they returned, *her* head turned with France and *bouts-rimés*; *his*, with *virtù*. They have instituted a poetic academy at Bath-Easton, give out subjects, and distribute prizes; publish the prize verses, and make themselves completely ridiculous; which is pity, as they are good-natured, well-meaning people. The poor Arcadian patroness does not spell one word of French or Italian right through her three volumes of Travels. I wonder we have never had our friend Lady Pomfret's, as she had something now and then like sense; they would have been still more absurd. Adieu!

P.S. I must add an anecdote of the Duchess-Countess that I heard last night. On some altercation between her and Sir Francis Molyneux, Black Rod, under whose custody she was in her own house, she carried him into another room, and showed him a hole in the ceiling or wainscot made by a pistol-ball. I have heard formerly that she used to terrify the Duke of Kingston in that manner with threatening to murder him or herself. I think they favoured her age as much as her person on her trial, for they have made her but fifty. She must be fifty-five or six. She and her brother were my playfellows, when we lived at Chelsea, and her father was Deputy-Governor of the College. I am fifty-nine almost, and boys and girls do not play together unless near of an age, much less before one of them is born. I believe you remember them at Chelsea as well as I; and what a heroine her mother was—at least I have not forgotten this story of the latter. She was coming home late at night, with two of the old pensioners as patrol, walking behind the coach. She was asleep, and was awakened by three footpads, one of whom held a pistol

at her breast. She coolly put her head out of the other window, and said, 'Fire!' The patrol fired, and shot the robber. The daughter does not degenerate.

Second P.S. There is not a word of truth in the report about Jamaica; such endless lies are coined every day, that one is afraid of writing a word of news before it is musty with age.

1696. To the Rev. William Mason.

Strawberry Hill, May 4, 1776.

Do you think I have a Duchess to deplume every day, that you bid me write to you again already? Unconscionable divine, voracious appetite! think of my poor swelled fingers that sigh after repose; think of my quivering ankles, that will carry me to no mart of news. I am here these two days, smelling my lilacs, and listening to my nightingales, and leaving the wicked town to the young and healthy. I did not *utinam* that *sedes senectae* should be my fate, that I should be able to do nothing but *sit* in my garden; but I am content hitherto, though I doubt the rest of my days will be still less comfortable; you might gild them if you would, but your letter hesitates whether you shall come southward or not this summer; remember, I must not calculate without my host the gout. Well, let me see the drawing you talk of, and which yet I must wait two posts before I know whether I am to see or not. You must have a mighty opinion of my patience or indifference, when you put it to so tantalizing a trial; be assured I have neither; neither the virtue of commanding my desires, nor the apathy that looks like commanding them. Those same desires of mine, it is true, are exceedingly contracted of late years, but then I *valdè volo* what I do *volo*.

My curiosity about anything you draw or write is augmented in proportion as it is decayed in general: my eyes are grown stronger as my other utensils are enfeebled. They twinkle with eagerness when you tell me of your drawing, or your *Garden* being finished.

The Countess of Bristol retired to Paris incontinently. A *ne exeat regno* came forth the night she was gone! a strange neglect in her adversaries! Don't let us talk of her any more; yes, I will tell you what the droll caustic Lord Abercorn said. Somebody hoped his Lordship had not suffered by the trial; he replied, 'Nobody suffered by it.'

They write to me from London that the provincial army, having been reinforced, had prepared to storm Boston, and had begun to cannonade it, and that General Howe, unable to maintain his post, had withdrawn with all his forces to Halifax. I had heard this on Thursday before I came out of town, but did not believe it[1], for the Americans have done nothing yet that has given me a high opinion of their generalship. And that Halifax was left for Howe to retreat to is hitherto incomprehensible, not to me, for I am ignorance itself; but everybody says so, and you know everybody is always in the right.

Soame Jenyns has published a confirmation of the Christian religion from internal evidence. Pray was not his *Origin of Evil* a little heterodox? I have dipped a little into this new piece, and thought I saw something like irony, but to be sure I am wrong, for the *Ecclesiastical Court* are quite satisfied. I must seal my letter, and leave my blue room to be seen by *Prince Yuzupoff*, who sent for a card of admission. We have a torrent of foreigners in England, and unfortunately they are all sent hither, but then

Letter 1696.—[1] It was the case; Howe evacuated Boston on March 6, 1776.

they comprehend nothing, and are gone in half an hour. I have read an account of Strawberry in a book called *Londres*; in which my name is Robert, my house lives at Putney, the book-cases in the library are of inlaid woods, and I have not a window but is entirely of painted glass. This is called seeing and describing. Adieu!

Yours ever,
H. W.

1697. To the Rev. William Mason.

May 14, 1776.

You are not apt to express yourself unintelligibly, nor I, I hope, to misunderstand you; I did not expect a drawing in colour, but with the pen, in chiaroscuro, which I like better on some subjects than in oil. I am still sorry it is not to be in the Exhibition.

I am but this minute come to town, and know nothing but from the papers, which say everything prospers with the Americans. As they are driving out all the Scotch, I conclude the Duchess of Kingston will contribute another bank-note[1].

Do you, or do you not, ever come to town again? do not be enigmatic in a reply to this question.

Yours ever,
H. W.

1698. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, May 17, 1776.

As I knew no more than the newspapers would tell you, I did not announce to you the retreat of the King's army from Boston. Great pains were taken, and no wonder, to soften this disgrace. Such arts may serve a moment,

Letter 1697.—[1] She had contributed fifty pounds towards the relief of the North American clergy.

but the truth emerges, unless some advantage compensates —and as yet, that is neither the case, nor seems likely to be. What is or will be the fate of General Howe or his army cannot be known for some time—I doubt his prospect is not fair. Many think Quebec itself is gone[1], and that the ministry know it. The American war begins to lose its popularity.

I saw in the papers to-day that your younger sister[2] is dead. I tell it you without ceremony: I believe you never was acquainted with her; nor was I.

My principal reason for writing now, is to send you a letter of attorney, without which Sir Edward and I cannot receive our salary: you will be so good as to have it witnessed by any two Englishmen, and return it as soon as you can. I hope this slight one is all the trouble we shall give you.

By the long interval, I trust Lady Lucy is quite out of danger, and your nephew at ease about her.

We swarm with new peers and peeresses, English, Scotch, and Irish; you will see the two former in the *Gazette*; the last are known, but not yet declared. We have coveys of foreigners too, particularly French: I have given two dinners here lately to the latter.

Is it not shameful to send such a note as this so far? If I would have recourse to little arts, I might have transcribed the list of peerages, which would have reached to the bottom of the page; but a bead-roll of unknown names would only tire you. It has long been a settled point that we cannot correspond about obscure persons, as many of these are. You are a stranger to common actors:

LETTER 1698.—[1] This was not the case; General Carleton held out until May, when the town was relieved by the arrival of a British squadron. Carleton then sallied out and routed the besiegers.

[2] The two younger sisters of Sir Horace Mann were married to two gentlemen of the name of Foote, in Kent. *Walpole.*

like heroic tragedies, we can deal only in very great personages. Even newspapers have the advantage of me, for they may detail births, deaths, and marriages. The summer will probably not be so barren as that season generally is, though the great campaign will scarce begin before August; yet Quebec and Halifax must be fruitful of something, and perhaps Virginia and New York: but you are no vulture, and do not desire to banquet on battles. In one word, my letters, written for your information, must depend on events; and when they are short, or none, you will excuse it; and now that half my letter has been an apology, it is best to put an end to it.

May 18th.

Your letter of the 4th is this moment arrived, with others from France, and would enable me to cancel my last paragraphs. I am heartily sorry for your accounts of Lady Lucy, but cannot believe in the contagion of consumptions, especially in a better climate. Were it catching, it would be still more common here than it is. The child may indeed be affected, as partaking of the mother's constitution; but I, who have little faith in physicians, have none at all in those of Italy, where physic is as much an old woman as religion.

As soon as I go to town, I will inquire into the etiquette of your proxyhood[3]. The King gives plate to his godchildren; you, I dare to say, are to give nothing, and indubitably have no particular dress. Here I think the lord or lady who represent, ride backwards and alone in a royal coach; as your own is a representative of the King's, no doubt it will do; but you shall know in time.

In the present state of America, the estate of Tortola is not worth a lock of wool, nor would anybody purchase it

[3] Sir Horace was to stand godfather for the King to a child of Earl Cowper. *Walpole.*

but for a song. By the abstract of the letter to your nephew, the best pretensions seem to be in your brother's children, though by the property being reverted to the crown, you or your nephew might ask it. If obtained, it would certainly be advisable to sell it, for the expense of improving such grants is enormous, and can rarely be advantageous but to those who inhabit the spot. Proprietors are exposed to all sorts of disadvantages, and are enormously cheated by their agents, under every difficulty of prosecution. I know Mr. Duane, who has one of the fairest characters of the law, is old and very rich; and whatever he may have thought of formerly, perhaps does not think of the purchase at present. It will be long, I fear, ere American improvements revert to their late rapidity—however, the moment makes the boon a less favour to ask or grant.

A great revolution has happened in France. Monsieur de Maurepas and Vergennes, either not to burn their own fingers, or to involve Turgot (of whom the former was grown jealous) and Malesherbes in a scrape, set the latter on representing to the Queen that she ought to abandon M. de Guisnes[4]. Her Majesty, and consequently the public, laughed at him. He, who hated his place, asked to resign, and it was at last granted. But to-day's letters add, that Turgot is also dismissed, and the King has thanked M. de Guisnes for his services and made him a *Duc à brevet.* This implies what I have said these six months, that a woman who passes every night with a man, however unmanly and unwomanly, would prevail at last, if he passed no moments with any other woman. Malesherbes is the best of men, but void of all ambition. Turgot has the ambition of reforming the nation, and blessing the

[4] Guines and Turgot had quarrelled, and Guines had in consequence been recalled by Louis XVI. The Queen favoured Guines as an adherent of Choiseul, whom she wished to restore to power.

people; is intrepid, indifferent to fortune, and determined to carry his points, or fall. Such men, friends of human kind, could not think of war, however fair the opportunity we offered to them. Poor France, and poor England! Choiseul, if not Choiseul, some Louvois or other, will rise out of this fall of patriot philosophers; and then we shall be forced to see the wisdom of the Stamp Act, and of persisting in taxing America! Somebody rings at the gate, but I have said enough to furnish you with reflections. Monsieur de Noailles is named Ambassador hither, but that does not comfort me.

May 20.

I saw Lady Holdernesse [5] to-night and consulted her, and found I had been right in all my directions. *You* can give nothing unless you are ordered; and as you cannot possibly go in one of the King's coaches, need not ride backwards in your own. I have neither room, nor more to say if I had.

Postscript. You must fill up the blank with the date, and insert the name of William Suckling, Esq., after the words in the blank *authorize and appoint.* After W. Suckling, add, *Deputy Collector of the Customs, of New North Street, Red Lion Square.* I have writ the words necessary with a pencil.

1699. To the Rev. William Mason.

Strawberry Hill, May 20, 1776.

By my being here for some days I did not receive your drawing so soon as I ought to have done, nor even knew it was arrived. I thank you for it and like it excessively. You have done full justice to Gray; I am sorry he cannot

[5] One of the Ladies of the Bedchamber to Queen Charlotte. *Walpole.*

see it, for it is as fine as Mr. Bentley's drawings for the rest of his Odes. I admire particularly the figure of

Mista, black terrific maid[1],

who has a masculine gait that put me in mind of old Leveridge[2], when he used to act Hecate in *Macbeth*. I hope you will draw the *Descent of Odin*, too, which I love as much as any of Gray's Works. I never was fond of the *Triumphs of Owen*.

To-night I have received (here in town) from Mr. Stonhewer your second *Garden*[3]; it has my fullest imprimatur. I thought the beginning a little cold, but it soon rises into charming poetry, and from the 210th line is more beautiful than the first book. I like the 'sheep devouring the lawn into verdure,' and from thence all is quite to my taste. 'The dusty Sabbath' is admirable, but above all I am touched with the scene of cottage children, which is equal to anything you ever wrote; so are the lines on their sorrow and smiles. The story of Abdolonimus finishes the whole nobly. Write away, write away, and if you will not come to town—write away; yet I do wish now and then to see such a priest of Apollo. Adieu!

P.S. This was not sent so soon as it ought to have been by an accident.

1700. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, May 27, 1776.

This fatal year puts to the proof the nerves of my friendship! I was disappointed of seeing you when I had set

Letter 1699.—[1] See Gray's *Fatal Sisters*.

[2] Richard Leveridge, born about 1670, d. 1758; a singer and composer of songs. In the first capacity he acted Hecate in *Macbeth* when it was produced with music stated to have been partly composed by him.

[3] Probably the second book of Mason's poem *The English Flower Garden*.

my heart on it; and now I have lost Mr. Chute[1]! It is a heavy blow; but such strokes reconcile oneself to parting with this pretty vision, life! What is it, when one has no longer those to whom one speaks as confidentially as to one's own soul? Old friends are the great blessing of one's latter years—half a word conveys one's meaning. They have memory of the same events, and have the same mode of thinking. Mr. Chute and I agreed invariably in our principles; he was my counsel in my affairs, was my oracle in taste, the standard to whom I submitted my trifles, and the genius that presided over poor Strawberry! His sense decided me in everything; his wit and quickness illuminated everything. I saw him oftener than any man; to him in every difficulty I had recourse, and him I loved to have here, as our friendship was so entire, and we knew one another so entirely, that he alone never was the least constraint to me. We passed many hours together without saying a syllable to each other; for we were both above ceremony. I left him without excusing myself, read or wrote before him, as if he were not present. Alas! alas! and how *self* presides even in our grief! I am lamenting myself, not him!—no, I am lamenting my other self. Half is gone; the other remains solitary. Age and sense will make me bear my affliction with submission and composure—but for ever—that little *for ever* that remains, I shall miss him. My first thought will always be, 'I will go talk to Mr. Chute on this'; the second, 'alas! I cannot'; and therefore judge how my life is poisoned! I shall only seem to be staying behind one that is set out a little before me.

Mr. Chute for these last two or three years was much broken by his long and repeated shocks of gout, yet was

Letter 1700.—[1] John Chute, Esq., of the Vine in Hampshire; the last of the male line. *Walpole.*

amazingly well, considering he had suffered by it from twenty to seventy-three! Still as he never had had it in his head or stomach, I never was alarmed till last summer, when he had a low lingering fever, and sickness and pain in his breast, with returns of an excessive palpitation at his heart, which formerly much alarmed me, but of which he had been free for some years. He got better and went to the Bath, which gave him the gout, and he returned quite well; so well, that, alarmed at our situation, he thought of drawing some money out of the stocks and buying an annuity, saying he thought his life as good as any man's for five years. I am sure I thought so too. On Thursday last, being surprised at his not calling on me for three days, which was unusual, I went to him and was told that he was very ill. I found him in bed; he had so violent a pain in his breast that two days before he had sent for Dr. Thomas, whom he had consulted in the summer, though of all men the most averse to physicians. Thomas had given him an hundred drops of laudanum and assafœtida. Mr. Chute said, 'It is not the gout; I have had my palpitation, and fear it is something of a polypus.' Thus, perfectly reasonable, though with much more indifference than he who was all spirit and eagerness used to have, I attributed it to the laudanum, and indeed he desired me to leave him, as he was heavy, and wanted to sleep. He dozed all that evening, and had no return of pain. On Friday morning, still without pain. I saw him again. He had taken more assafœtida, but no more laudanum; yet, when I said I trusted the pain was gone, he said, 'I do not know; the effects of the laudanum are not yet gone.' I said I thought that impossible; that the pain would have surmounted the laudanum by that time, if the pain were not removed. I was coming hither on business, and charged his gentleman to send for me if the pain returned.

On Saturday morning I rejoiced at not receiving even a letter by the post, and concluded all was well.

This dream of satisfaction lasted all that day and Saturday night. I knew he would take no more laudanum, unless the pain returned, and that then I should be advertised. But, oh, unhappy! yesterday, just as I had breakfasted, and was in the garden, I heard the bell at the gate ring, and wondered, as it was but ten o'clock, who could come to me so early. I went to see, and met my *valet de chambre*, with a letter in his hand, who said, 'Oh, Sir, Mr. Chute is dead!' In a word, he had continued quite easy till three that morning, when he said, 'Who is in the room?' His own gentleman replied, 'I, Sir!' and, going to the bed, found him very ill, ran to call help, and, returning as quick as possible, saw him dead! It was certainly a polypus; his side immediately grew black as ink. A charming death for him, dearest friend! And why should I lament? His eyes, always short-sighted, were grown dimmer, his hearing was grown imperfect, his hands were all chalk-stones and of little use, his feet very lame—yet how not lament? The vigour of his mind was strong as ever; his powers of reasoning clear as demonstration; his rapid wit astonishing as at forty, about which time you and I knew him first. Even the impetuosity of his temper was not abated, and all his humane virtues had but increased with his age. He was grown sick of the world; saw very, very few persons; submitted with unparalleled patience to all his sufferings; and, in five-and-thirty years, I never once saw or heard him complain of them, nor, passionate as he was, knew him fretful. His impatience seemed to proceed from his vast sense, not from his temper: he saw everything so clearly and immediately, that he could not bear a momentary contradiction from folly or defective reasoning. Sudden contempt broke out, particularly on

politics, which, having been fixed in him by a most sensible father, and matured by deep reflection, were rooted in his inmost soul. His truth, integrity, honour, spirit, and abhorrence of all dirt, confirmed his contempt; and even I, who am pretty warm and steady, was often forced to break off politics with him, so impossible was it to be zealous enough to content him when I most agreed with him. Nay, if I disputed with him, I learnt something from him, and always saw truth in a stronger and more summary light.

His possession of the quintessence of argument reduced it at once into axioms, and the clearness of his ideas struck out flashes of the brightest wit. He saw so suddenly and so far, that, as Mr. Bentley said of him long ago, 'His wit strikes the more you analyse it, and more than at first hearing; he jumps over two or three intermediate ideas, and couples the first with the third or fourth.' Don't wonder I pour out my heart to you; you knew him, and know how faithfully true all I say of him. My loss is most irreparable. To me he was the most faithful and secure of friends, and a delightful companion. I shall not seek to replace him. Can I love any that are old, more than I have had reason for loving them? and is it possible to love younger, as one loved an habitual old friend of thirty-five years' standing? I have young relations that may grow upon me, for my nature is affectionate, but can they grow *old* friends? My age forbids that. Still less can they grow companions. Is it friendship to explain half one says? One must relate the history of one's memory and ideas; and what is that to the young, but old stories? No, my dear Sir, *you* could be that resource, but I must not think of it—I must not be selfish. I must do what I ought to do, while I remain here; pass my time as amusingly as I can; enjoy the friends I have left; drink my grief in silence—it is too

sincere for parade; and what cares the world about my private sensations? Or what has an old man to do but to try to be forgotten; and to remember how soon he will be so? Forgive this expansion of my heart; it was necessary to me. I will not often mention poor Mr. Chute even to you. His loss is engraven on my soul, and real grief does not seek for applause. Could the world's plaudit comfort me, sit with me, hear me, advise me? Did it know Mr. Chute's worth as well as I did? Does it love me as well? When it does, I will beg its compassion. I have done, and will now show you I am master of myself, and remember *you*, and consider that at this distance of time you cannot feel what I do, and must be anxious about public affairs. If I indulged my own feelings, I should forswear thinking of the public. *He* is gone to whom I ran with every scrap of news I heard; but I promised to forget myself: I will go take a walk, shed a tear, and return to you more composed.

I take up my pen again, and fear my last sentences have made you expect some news. I know none; except that I think the intoxication of this country begins to wear off. The stocks have taken the alarm, and the ministers have felt it some time. The change in the French councils has changed the spirits of ours. I believe almost any peace would be welcome to them. I doubt the Americans have experienced too much of our inability to hurt them; and as I have no great faith in virtue tempted by power, I expect that the American leaders, having too fair a field before them, will not easily part with dictatorships and consulships to retire to their private ploughs. Oh madness! to have squandered away such an empire! Now we tremble at France, which America enabled us to resist. How naturally our ideas hang on our country, even when all future ages are the same to one who is going to leave it! What will it

be to me a few years hence, whether England shrinks back to its little insular insignificance under George the Third or George the Tenth? Yet, as our minds seldom roam into the future affairs of the world, we rejoice or grieve over the state of our country according to the condition in which we leave it at our departure. Else why do people nurse visions of pride about their own descendants? How long do the greatest and most ancient families last? What a speck in rolling ages does the longest genealogy occupy!—but I will moralize no more. To-day's misfortune has given a wise cast to my mind. Spirits and folly will have their turn again, and perhaps are as wise. To act with common sense according to the moment, is the best wisdom I know; and the best philosophy, to do one's duties, take the world as it comes, submit respectfully to one's lot, bless the Goodness that has given so much happiness with it, whatever it is, and despise affectation, which only makes our weakness more contemptible, by showing we know that we are not what we wish to appear. Adieu!

1701. To Viscount Nuneham.

I am very sorry, my dear Lord, to have missed seeing you both yesterday and to-day; and so I always am, as your goodness to me is excessive, and most gratefully felt. I wished particularly to ask a favour, which is that your Lordship will do me the honour of dining at Strawberry Hill some day before you go out of town; and I flatter myself Lady Nuneham will do so too, though she ought to be ashamed to come so near my printing house, when she is so cruel as to refuse to do it the honour it is so ambitious of. Any day after the Birthday will be equal to me, and if you both condescend, I will beg Lord and Lady Jersey to be so good as to meet you.

Letter 1701.—Endorsed May 1776.

Are you thunder-struck or laughter-struck with the revolution in the Penetralia[1]? Whither shall we go if Lord Solon[2] and Bishop Plato[3] are not perfect enough to form young Montezuma, the future Emperor of America? I hear even Mlle. *Crumb*[4] is no longer our *Mie*.

Yours most devotedly,

H. W.

1702. To the Rev. William Cole.

Strawberry Hill, June 1, 1776.

Mr. Granger's papers have been purchased by Lord Mountstewart, who has the portrait-frenzy as well as I; and, though I am the head of the sect, I have no longer the rage of propagating it, nor would I on any account take the trouble of revising and publishing the MSS. Mr. Granger had drowned his taste for portraits in the ocean of biography; and, though he began with elucidating prints, he at last only sought prints that he might write the lives of those they represented. His work was grown and growing so voluminous, that an abridgement only could have made it useful to collectors.

I am not surprised that you will not assist Dr. Kippis[1]: Bishop Laud and William Prynne could never agree. You are very justly more averse to Mr. Masters, who is a pragmatic fellow, and at best troublesome.

If the agate knives you are so good as to recommend to me can be tolerably authenticated, have any royal marks, or,

[1] An allusion to the changes in the establishment of the Prince of Wales and Prince Frederick.

[2] Lord Holdernesse, who had resigned the post of Governor to the Princes.

[3] Markham, Bishop of Chester, dismissed from his post as Preceptor.

[4] Mlle. Khröme, a Swiss Protestant. She was governess to Lady Holdernesse's daughter until induced by the Queen to enter the royal service. According to Horace Walpole, the favour at court of Lord and Lady Holdernesse was indirectly due to this lady's influence.

Letter 1702.—[1] Andrew Kippis, D.D. (1725–1795), a Nonconformist. He had undertaken to prepare the second edition of the *Biographia Britannica*.

at least, old setting of the time, and will be sold for two guineas, I should not dislike having them, though I have scarce room to stick a knife and fork. But if I trouble you to pay for them, you must let me know all I owe you already, for I know I am in your debt for prints and pamphlets, and this new debt will make the whole considerable enough to be remitted. I have lately purchased three apostle-spoons to add to the one you was so kind as to give me.

What is become of Mr. Essex? does he never visit London? I wish I could tempt him thither or hither. I am not only thinking of building my offices in a collegiate style, for which I have a good design and wish to consult him, but I am actually wanting assistance at this very moment, about a smaller gallery that I wish to add this summer; and which, if Mr. Essex was here, he should build directly. It is scarce worth asking him to take the journey on purpose, though I would pay for his journey hither and back, and would lodge him here for the necessary time. I can only beg you to mention it to him as an idle jaunt, the object is so trifling. I wish more that you could come with him. Do you leave your poor parishioners and their souls to themselves? if you do, I hope Dr. Kippis will seduce them. Adieu! dear Sir. Yours ever,

H. W.

1703. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, June 5, 1776.

My letters grow scarce or multiply according as the season is fruitful of events or not. These last days have been very prolific. The freshest incidents, and those that will interest you the most, are from America, and have raised the hopes that a fortnight ago were exceedingly desponding. The provincials have again attempted to

storm Quebec, and been repulsed with great loss by the conduct and bravery of Carleton[1], who, Mr. Conway has all along said, would prove himself a very able general. Succours have since arrived in the town. The remarkable General Lee[2] is taken prisoner by General Clinton in Carolina; as the Americans say, by his own treachery: however, though the fact is not doubted, as it comes from themselves, the story is very dark. General Howe is arrived safe at Halifax, some say, having been repulsed at New York[3]. The American Admiral Hopkins, with three or four ships, has been worsted and disgraced by a single frigate[4]. Your Bible, the *Gazette*, will tell you more particulars, I suppose, for I have not yet seen it; and the *à la mains*[5] of the court have given Howe a victory, and Hopkins chains, which I do not believe will appear in that chronicle; however, you may certainly sing some Te Deums in your own chapel.

These triumphs have come on the back of a very singular revolution which has happened in the Penetralia, and made very great noise. Yesterday se'nnight it was declared that the Bishop of Chester[6] and Mr. Jackson[7], Preceptor and Sub-preceptor to the Prince of Wales, were dismissed, and that Lord Holdernesse and Mr. Smelt[8], Governor and Sub-governor, had resigned their posts; Lord Bruce[9] and Dr. Hurd[10], Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, being named

Letter 1703.—[1] Afterwards Sir Guy Carleton, Knight of the Bath, and Commander at New York till the Peace. *Walpole.*

[2] This did not prove true at that time, though it did happen afterwards. *Walpole.*

[3] This was not the case.

[4] The *Glasgow*, commanded by Captain Tyringham Howe. The engagement took place on April 6, 1776, off the coast of Connecticut.

[5] Abbreviation of 'nouvelles à la main.'

[6] Dr. Markham, afterwards Archbishop of York. *Walpole.*

[7] Cyril Jackson (1746–1819). He took orders soon after his dismissal, and was Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, 1783–1809.

[8] Leonard Smelt, Esq. *Walpole.*

[9] Bruce Brudenel Bruce, youngest brother of the Earl of Cardigan. *Walpole.*

[10] Dr. Hurd was afterwards Bishop of Worcester. *Walpole.*

their successors, and the former declared Earl of Ailesbury. No reason whatever was assigned for so total a change, which did not allay the astonishment. It is now known that on Lord Holdernesse's return from the south of France he found a great alienation from him in the minds of his royal pupils[11], which he attributed to Jackson. This grew so bad, that after vainly complaining of Jackson, and as vainly having obtained reproof, the Bishop, who seemed to be the instigator of the manœuvre and subsequent *disobedience*, was turned out with his instrument, and the Earl saw it hopeless to try to recover his authority. Mr. Smelt, promoted by him, would not survive him. I make no comments—your own mind will suggest alarming reflections on the prospect of a scene that has twice happened since the family came over[12].

What will you say, if out of this change of decoration, another has happened already; yes, already! Lord Bruce, who had taken seisin, retired abruptly into the country, without asking or taking leave. On inquiry where he was and when he would return, his colleague said he had no thoughts of returning. It is said that his mad wife[13], Mr. Hoare's daughter, had written a piteous letter, promising she should die if deprived of her dear Lord; but must not her dear Lord be as frantic, to quit in so indecent a manner? Have not I told you long that we are all mad? Whence do you think the successor is chosen? From the self-same family. It is the Duke of Montagu.

Here is a short letter, which with any address I might have made a folio; but I content myself with giving you

[11] The Prince of Wales, and Prince Frederick, Bishop of Osnaburgh, afterwards Duke of York. *Walpole.*

[12] An allusion to the quarrels in the household of George III when Prince of Wales. See letter to Mann of Dec. 11, 1752.

[13] Susanna (d. 1783), daughter of Henry Hoare, of Stourhead, Wiltshire; m. (1) Charles Boyle, Viscount Dungarvan (eldest son of fifth Earl of Cork); (2) Thomas Brudenell Bruce, Baron Bruce of Tottenham, afterwards Earl of Ailesbury.

the quintessence of events. My own mind loses every year the roots that hold it to the world. There is little pleasure in thinking, when one has no longer those to whom and with whom one loved to communicate reflections. One's own country becomes another country when the *dramatis personae* are totally changed. Young princes and their favourites only give one a peep into the history of the future world, as if a printer brought one the wet sheets of a book that is to be published after one's death. If one outlives one's friends, it is being but a Strulbrug. Adieu!

1704. To the Rev. William Cole.

Strawberry Hill, June 11, 1776.

I am grieved, and feel for your gout; I know the vexations and disappointments it occasions, and how often it will return when one thinks it going or gone. It represents life and its vicissitudes. At last I know it makes one content when one does not feel actual pain—and what contents, may be called a blessing: but it is that sort of blessing that extinguishes hopes and views, and is not so luxurious but one can bear to relinquish it. I seek amusements now to amuse me; I used to rush into them, because I had an impulse and wished for what I sought. My want of Mr. Essex has a little of both kinds, and it is for an addition to this place, for which my fondness is not worn out. I shall be very glad to see him here either on the 20th or 21st of this present month, and shall have no engagement till the 23rd, and will gladly pay his journey. I am sorry I must not hope that you will accompany him.

Yours ever,

H. Walpole.

1705. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, June 20, 1776.

If one could resign one's place, without being supposed going into opposition, I should certainly ask my sovereign lady's leave to quit the office of gazetteer; and my motion would be as singular as my practice. Incapacity is my plea, and age the cause. It is a young world, and I neither live in it, nor am acquainted with it. I know nothing worth knowing, I do nothing worth doing—of what can I write?—My old friends die off, I cannot make new, for the fewer ties one has to a world one is going to leave the better. I have been almost alone at Strawberry ever since your Ladyship left town. I came yesterday, and return to-morrow. Had there been any news, I should have heard—nay, perhaps I did, for I called at Mr. Beauclerk's in the evening, where I found Lord Pembroke, Lord Palmerston, Garrick, Burke, the Dean of Derry[1], Lord Robert Spencer, and Mr. Gibbon; but they talked so loud (not the two last), and made such a noise, and Lord Palmerston so much more noise with trying to talk, that it was impossible to know what they said, under the distance of a mile from them. All I did learn was, that Miss Vernon[2] is not married. I should be very angry if she was, and you had said nothing of it; and that another lady[3], who has been on the brink of marrying as many Dukes as the Duchess of Argyll, is not yet Lady Maynard. It is pity; she deserves a peerage as much as most that have got them lately. The Binghams are incog. at Paris; their letters of recommendation announced them

Letter 1705.—[1] Dr. Barnard.

[2] Miss Henrietta Vernon married on July 14, 1776 (as his second wife), George Greville, second Earl of Warwick.

[3] Anne Parsons, known as Mrs. Horton, formerly the mistress of the Duke of Grafton. She married (in June or July 1776) Charles Maynard, second Viscount Maynard.

as my Lord and Lady Lucan[4], and the patents are still wind-bound.

I smiled at your Ladyship's orders, but I think the person you gave me charge of is in no danger of what you apprehend, unless for debt.

To make this a decent letter, I shall transcribe some lines that I found on my table on Sunday night. I had dined at Lady Blandford's, and the Beauclerks with Mr. Gibbon and Monsieur le Texier had been to drink tea with me in the meantime. The last wrote these lines in a moment, and they are certainly good for impromptus,—

Si vous aviez scû qu'aujourdhui
Dût venir dans votre castel
La plus aimable mylady,
Qui n'a nulle autre en son pareil;
Vous n'auriez bougé du céans,
Et sans courir la pretantaine,
Vous auriez attendu cent ans
Plutôt que perdre telle aubaine.
Pourtant dans icelle visite
Nous serions bien désappointés
Sans la bonne Dame Marguerite,
Qui nous a fait d'excellent thé.
Elle a suspendu nos regrets,
Et nous a prouvé comme un livre,
Par ses soins et son sçavoir vivre,
Qu'à tels maîtres sont tels valets.

I am to have Mr. Essex to-morrow from Cambridge, to try if he can hang me on anywhere another room for Lady Di's drawings. I have turned the little yellow bedchamber below stairs into a beauty room, with the pictures I bought[5], along with the Cowley, at Mr. Lovi-

[4] Sir Charles Bingham was created on July 24, 1776, Baron Lucan of Castlebar, county Mayo.

[5] Nineteen portraits of persons prominent at the court of Charles II, copied by Charles Jervas from the originals, and sold with his house at Hampton to Edward Lovibond

bond's sale, but I could not place the drawings there, because I will have a sanctuary for them, not to be shown to all the profane that come to see the house, who in truth almost drive me out of my house. Adieu, Madam, remember this is summer, and that I am Methusalem. He left off writing news when he was past an hundred.

1706. To Count Schuwalof.

Je me flatte, M. le Comte, que vous aurez reçû avant cette lettre une petite caisse de Medalions, que j'ai adressèe à notre bonne Amie de St. Joseph [1]. J'ai depensé tout votre argent, mais la quantité n'est pas inconsiderable, et cependant il m'en reste encore deux à vous envoyer, que le Marchand avoit oubliè, et qu'il ne m'a remis, qu'apres la Caisse partie. Parmi celles que vous avez, il y a une tete en profile de My Lord Chatham, que vous reconnoitrez tres facilement. Si vous etes content de mes soins, n'oserai-[je] pas me flatter que vous voulez bien me faire l'honneur d'être votre commissionaire? Il me sera bien sensible d'avoir occasion de vous faire souvenir de moi. Ce n'est point assurement que vous ne m'aiez bien trop distingue par la place que vous m'avez destine dans certain Portrait precieux que je n'ai pas la hardiesse de montrer. Mon estampe sera encore trop glorieuse si vous lui faites l'honneur de la garder dans votre chambre; mais jamais je n'aurai le front de me faire encadrer avec Vous. Vous me privez de l'honneur de me vanter d'avoir votre portrait, et je vous supplie de ne pas attribuer à la fausse modestie ma repugnance à occuper une place aussi honorable, et qui n'est

(1724–1775), son of a Director of the East India Company. Lovibond wrote poetry and contributed to the *World*.

Letter 1706.—Not in C.; reprinted *verbatim et liberatim* from facsimile in Lescure's *Correspondance de la Marquise du Deffand*, vol. ii. pp. 560–1.

[1] Madame du Deffand.

pas faite pour un petit Homme comme moi, qui n'ai jamais rien fait de meritoire. Votre Portrait serait depreciè à cause de l'accessoire. Si vous me fachez, je vous ferai tenir à la main le Cardinal de Richelieu, aussi Indigne d'etre votre Associé que ne l'est,

Monsr le Comte,
votre tres devouè Serviteur

De Strawberry Hill, ce 23 Juin 1776. HORACE WALPOLE.

1707. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, June 25, 1776.

I ASSURE you, my dear Madam, that it is no idleness that dictates my excuses. It would be my greatest satisfaction to be able to entertain every minute you could bestow on me; nor is my nature idle; but my summers are so solitary, or passed in such insipid company, my age weans me so much from the young and active world, and I care so little what it does, that I cannot write letters, without feeling that they want an apology. When I find I grow old, would it not be strange vanity to imagine that others do not perceive it? I never had parts that could afford to be diminished, and it is honest to give one's friends warning when the crack is begun. But I hate to talk of myself, even on the depreciating side, though much more excusable than its contrary. I have given you notice: you shall know everything I hear worth telling you; but I cannot make brick with my Lady Greenwich's gazettes.

I am extremely pleased with the new Countess of Warwick, though I think the Earl might have made a more suitable match without wandering out of the family [1].

LETTER 1707.—[1] Horace Walpole probably refers to Lord Ossory's own sister, Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick, married in 1779 to the Earl of Shelburne.

I can easily conceive why a notable aunt[2] did not think so. Before your Ladyship's letter arrived, I had heard of a mysterious and very private party on the water, which left me no doubt. There was only Lady Notable, Miss Vernon, the Earl, and his brother. On perceiving they were seen, the ladies held down their heads, and Miss Vernon landed with her hood quite down over her face. How certain should we be of governing the peer, if we could have persuaded him to steal his bride! for you know, Madam, one always governs those one has cunningly made marry. Pray continue your goodness to the two other sisters, that they may spitefully be matched to dukes; or was it to show more consummate address than another protectress? Forgive me if I suspect that it was not mere kindness to the bride that operated the service, though I hope it will prove real happiness to her, who is so intituled to it.

I heard t'other day, from very good authority, that all Ireland is *America mad*—that was the expression. It was answered, 'So is all the Continent.' Is it not odd that this island should, for the first time since it was five years old, be the only country in Europe in its senses?

The case is, England was never governed by Scotland before, where a very profound author has pronounced the wisest heads in Christendom grow; and yet the Scots do not love that author with all his impartiality. Yours, Madam, &c.,

DUNCE SCOTUS.

P.S. I have just been told a good story of the Duchess of Queensberry. She dined at the Dean of Lincoln's[3] with

[2] Most likely the Duchess of Bedford, aunt of the Miss Vernons and of Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick.

[3] Hon. and Rev. James Yorke (d. 1808), fifth son of first Earl of Hardwicke; Dean of Lincoln, 1762–

much company. After dinner, the ladies retiring, found themselves shut into a drawing-room without any convenience, and with but one door. When they could keep their patience no longer, the Duchess, opening the door into the parlour, said, 'Mr. Dean, you have given us an admirable dinner, good wine, and an excellent dessert, but you must remember that we are not residentiaries.'

I enclose a letter of another Duchess, which is not much inferior to her epistle to Foote. I believe you may trust to its being genuine, for I received it from Italy.

My lock of hay begs its respects to your hay mountains, and hopes they are in a fair way.

2nd P.S. Though your Ladyship would persuade me to cast my slough, I assure you I am not without flatterers of another sort, who encourage me in my Tom-Hearneality. I have just received a poem called *Wittenham Hill*, in which I am hailed as a father of ancient lore,

> What means (O! for a Walpole's antique skill!)
> What means the milk-white cross on yonder hill!

I can but laugh at my own party-coloured life—sometimes at Paris, and an editor of Grammont; sometimes playing all night at pharaoh with Madame de Mirepoix, or at loo with a greater favourite; now writing fables for Lady Anne, and verses for the Graces; then accused as a plotting republican; while, at best, the truth is, as I told the late Lord Holland when I set up my printing press,

> Some have at first for wits, then poets past,
> Turn'd printers next, and prov'd plain fools at last.

3rd P.S. They are so amazed and charmed at Paris with Lady Bingham's miniatures, that the Duke of Orléans has

81; Bishop of St. Davids, 1774–79; of Gloucester, 1779–81; of Ely, 1781–1808.

given her a room at the Palais Royal to copy which of his pictures she pleases. The Queen, on the Duc d'Aiguillon's losing his only daughter, begged of the King to permit him to go wherever he pleases, except to court, with positive command never to appear there. This shows her Majesty's power; and Mr. Falkener[4], who has just returned from Italy through France, told me last night that it is generally believed M. de Choiseul will be replaced; that they have thirty-six ships ready, and are even pressing carpenters into the service. What a prospect! Who will at last be the America-mad?

4th P. S. Pray do not give a copy of the Duchess's letter; for I have no ill-will to her, and do not want to spread her follies.

MA CHERE AMIE, Calais, le 26 Avril, 1776[5].

J'ai l'honneur de vous annoncer que les *Pères* ont decidez que la sentance de la Cour Chrêtienne ne devoit pas justifier le mariage que j'ai contracté avec le Duc de Kingston. Ils ont dishonnerez la Cour Ecclesiastique dont les dogmes ont été suivis inviolablement pendant 1475 années. En detruisant cette cour de justice je suis la malheureuse sacrifice, mais ils ne peuvent enlever mon bien, ils n'ont pas ordonner pour me punir que de leur faire la reverence. Ce fut tout pour le public, mais vis-à-vis de vous, ma chère amie, je vous confesse que je reste dans un étonnement sans egale. L'ame frémit contre l'injustice, qu'on ma faite. J'espère que si vous voulez penser à moi, vous serez persuadée que j'ai resistée pendant 20 années à accepter la main du Duc de Kingston. Scachant que le Comte de Bristol d'à present, autrefois Mr. Hervey, pretendoit avoir des droits sur moi,

[4] William Augustus Fawkener, eldest son of Sir Everard Fawkener, Knight; Envoy to Lisbon, 1786; to Florence, 1787; to St. Petersburg, 1790. He was also Clerk to the Privy Council.

[5] Enclosed in the previous letter, but hitherto printed separately. (See *Notes and Queries*, Aug. 4, 1900.) Vernon Smith, who first printed this letter in his edition of Walpole's Letters to Lady Ossory, gives the following note:—'The spelling of this letter is as in the original, which is in Kirgate's handwriting.'

je ne l'auroit pas dans un age plus avancé risquée, j'ai donc pris le parti de me marier qu'avec la permission de l'archevêque et la sentance de la Cour Ecclesiastique que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous montrer.

Mon intention estoit pour le moins aussi bonne que mon sort est malheureux. Je suis donc, ma chère amie, dans la Cour Ecclesiastique reconnue pour Duchesse de Kingston, avec les *Pères* comme Comtesse de Bristol. En ligne directe de ma propre maison il y a 350 ans, et pour les pas je les ayant toujours cedez à ceux qui vouloit les accepter— la grandeur et les richesses ne sont pour moi que des embarras.

Je vous embrasse, et je suis de cœur et d'ame,
ma chère amie, toujours à vous,
ELIZABETH, DUCHESSE DE KINGSTON.

Aussitot que la sentance fut passée je me suis embarqué pour Calais, car ces bons messieurs avoient desin de me retenir en Angleterre par un loi qu'on nomme a *ne exeat regno*, mais m'étant sauvé il n'est plus question de ce malheur la! Je vous prie d'assurer le Prince Connestable de mes respects, et de même au deux Princes Cardinaux.

1708. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, June 30, 1776.

I was very glad to receive your letter, not only because always most glad to hear of you, but because I wished to write to you, and had absolutely nothing to say till I had something to answer. I have lain but two nights in town since I saw you; have been, else, constantly here, very much employed, though doing, hearing, knowing exactly nothing. I have had a Gothic architect from Cambridge to design me a gallery, which will end in a mouse, that is, in an hexagon closet of seven feet diameter. I have been making a beauty room, which was effected by buying two dozen of small copies of Sir Peter Lely, and hanging them up; and I have been making hay, which

is not made, because I put it off for three days, as I chose it should adorn the landscape when I was to have company, and so the rain is come, and has drowned it. However, as I can even turn calculator when it is to comfort me for not minding my interest, I have discovered that it is five to one better for me that my hay should be spoiled than not; for, as the cows will eat it if it is damaged, which horses will not, and as I have five cows and but one horse, is not it plain that the worse my hay is, the better? Do not you with your refining head go, and, out of excessive friendship, find out something to destroy my system. I had rather be a philosopher than a rich man; and yet have so little philosophy, that I had much rather be content than be in the right.

Mr. Beauclerk and Lady Di have been here four or five days—so I had both content and exercise for my philosophy. I wish Lady Ailesbury was as fortunate! The Pembrokes, Churchills, Le Texier, as you will have heard, and the Garricks have been with us. Perhaps, if alone, I might have come to you; but you are all too healthy and harmonious. I can neither walk nor sing; nor, indeed, am fit for anything but to amuse myself in a sedentary trifling way. What I have most certainly not been doing, is writing anything: a truth I say to you, but do not desire you to repeat. I deign to satisfy scarce anybody else. Whoever reported that I was writing anything, must have been so totally unfounded, that they either blundered by guessing without reason, or knew they lied—and that could not be with any kind intention; though saying I am going to do what I am not going to do is wretched enough. Whatever is said of me without truth, anybody is welcome to believe that pleases.

In fact, though I have scarce a settled purpose about anything, I think I shall never write any more. I have

written a great deal too much, unless I had written better, and I know I should now only write still worse. One's talent, whatever it is, does not improve at near sixty—yet, if I liked it, I dare to say a good reason would not stop my inclination;—but I am grown most indolent in that respect, and most absolutely indifferent to every purpose of vanity. Yet without vanity I am become still prouder and more contemptuous. I have a contempt for my countrymen that makes me despise their approbation. The applause of slaves and of the foolish mad is below ambition. Mine is the haughtiness of an ancient Briton, that cannot write what would please this age, and would not, if he could.

Whatever happens in America, this country is undone. I desire to be reckoned of the last age, and to be thought to have lived to be superannuated, preserving my senses only for myself and for the few I value. I cannot aspire to be traduced like Algernon Sydney, and content myself with sacrificing to him amongst my lares. Unalterable in my principles, careless about most things below essentials, indulging myself in trifles by system, annihilating myself by choice, but dreading folly at an unseemly age, I contrive to pass my time agreeably enough, yet see its termination approach without anxiety. This is a true picture of my mind; and it must be true, because drawn for you, whom I would not deceive, and could not, if I would. Your question on my being writing drew it forth, though with more seriousness than the report deserved—yet talking to one's dearest friend is neither wrong nor out of season. Nay, you are my best apology. I have always contented myself with your being perfect, or, if your modesty demands a mitigated term, I will say, unexceptionable. It is comical, to be sure, to have always been more solicitous about the virtue of one's friend than about one's own; yet, I repeat

it, you are my apology—though I never was so unreasonable as to make you answerable for my faults in return; I take them wholly to myself. But enough of this. When I know my own mind, for hitherto I have settled no plan for my summer, I will come to you. Adieu!

1709. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, July 10, 1776.

Wars and rumours of wars! Is your Bedfordshire militia ready, Madam? The Duc de Chartres is at Cales, and even the stocks, who hitherto have been as dull as the country gentlemen, begin not to like it. The Duke of Richmond, who is returned, thinks Maurepas will keep off the war as long as he can, and yet the Duke owns the preparations are prodigious; and that Spain has insisted on this armament. Do they humour her in an armament, and yet mean nothing by it? Where have we an army, except of Irish peers[1]?

When is Henrietta[2] to take possession of Warwick Castle? Is a dun cow to be roasted whole, or boiled in Guy's caldron? Lady Powis is gone for such an exploit on her son's coming of age. This is all I know upon earth, but that my hay is a perfect water souchy, and my roses and orange-flowers all drowned; and I am such a heathen, that I am more sorry for my nosegays than my revenue. Have you had but a Patriot court? that is, a thin one? You see I am disposed, Madam, to pay my *quit-rents*, though I have but a pepper-corn; but we that know nothing, can say nothing. Jemmy Brudenel[3], no doubt, can write volumes full of matter—happy man, say I.

Letter 1709.—[1] Thirty Irish peers had recently been created.

[2] Miss Henrietta Vernon.

[3] Hon. James Brudenell, afterwards Earl of Cardigan, Master of the Robes to the King.

He dwells amidst the royal family,
And can of *all* our Harries, *all* our Edwards talk[4]

of whom, thank Heaven! there is a tolerable quantity. I shall be much better company when the French land; though, as I have a little money in the stocks, to be sure it will not be very pleasant. Adieu! Madam; write to me, that I may have something to answer at least.

1710. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, July 13, 1776.

When the wind blows, wait for the echo. If your Ladyship believes all you read in the papers, I humbly pity you. Instead of crediting a quarter, I have the honour to think that there is little but lies in the accounts from America. I see regiments and ships sending every day, as if the ministers thought they had not half force enough there, though by their own accounts the business will be over before those that are going can pack up a nightcap. Instead of the war being near at an end, I believe we are going to have two more; and as our army is in America, I hope France and Spain will be so punctilious as to go thither after it. If they have not given assurances they will, there does not seem much sense in sending every man out of the kingdom, unless as an excuse for non-resistance. However, as nothing is so fallible as conjectures built on reasoning, I choose to pin my faith on firmer ground. I dreamt that Lord Guilford was sent to the Congress, that the leaders immediately accepted pensions and Irish peerages, and that their wives instantly hoisted pyramids of feathers on their heads to show that their hearts were entirely English. I give you my word this dream is true, and I prefer it to the *Gazette* itself.

[4] Pope, *Sat.* viii. ll. 103, 105 adapted.

Thus much for my political faith: now to answer your questions, Madam. What am I doing? Strictly speaking, nothing: yet, according to the expressive old adage, I am as busy as a hen and one chick. I am obeying the Gospel, and putting my house in order, am ranging my prints and papers, am *composing* books, in the literal sense, and in the only sense I will compose books any more. I am pasting Henry Bunbury's[1] prints into a volume; and as man is a contradiction, I am setting my house in order against I leave it—and yet am building a new room. I do not go to Bristol, for Lady Laura[2] is recovered, and I shall go for a few days to Brighthelmstone, because I am not recovered, and want the sea air to recover that strength I never had, and is not all returned. Surely there is enough of myself!

Truly I know not whether the young Prince is inoculated or not. I suppose, as Pope says of Selkirk, 'if I live I shall love him,' but as yet he has not taken up an inch in my thoughts, which have vast difficulty in extending their affections to babes and sucklings. Even princes of fourteen[3] do not enter into my litany. And this leads to another of your Ladyship's questions. Windsor is not the great castle, but its footstool, the small house where Queen Anne used to take a cheerful glass with Lady Masham. It is whispered that change of air has been recommended. Nay, the lookers-out are full of I know not what visions, presented to their wicked imaginations by certain rays that have flashed out of the cloud that lately hung over the A-B-C-dario. *Bons mots* are quoted worthy of young Ammon in his nonage. Another chimera is, that there is a visible

LETTER 1710.—[1] Henry William Bunbury (1750-1811), second son of Rev. Sir William Bunbury, fifth Baronet. He presented one of his drawings ('Richmond Hill') to Horace Walpole.

[2] Lady Laura Waldegrave.

[3] The Prince of Wales was nearly fourteen.

atrophy and wasting. Now for my part, I am determined not to build any views on a fourth reign, like those late seers the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Bolingbroke; because, if I should have the misfortune to survive to that period, I should probably be as much a child as I was when I was presented to George I, and therefore I declare I will never hear a word of politics under George IV.

I came to town last night on a little business, and return to-morrow. The Duchess of Bristol was seen yesterday in this very town. More this deponent saith not.

One word more, on our old quarrel, and I have done. *Such letters* as mine! I will tell you a fact, Madam, in answer to that phrase. On Mr. Chute's death, his executor sent me a bundle of letters he had kept of mine, for above thirty years. I took the trouble to read them over, and I bless my stars they were as silly, insipid things, as ever I don't desire to see again. I thought when I was young and had great spirits, that I had some parts too, but now I have seen it under my own hand that I had not, I will never believe it under anybody's hand else; and so I bid you good night.

1711. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, July 16, 1776.

You will think I have been less periodically punctual than usual, but appearances only are against me, for I wrote to you a week ago by a person that is gone to Italy, though the Lord knows when you will receive it; nor is it much matter, for I had nothing new to tell you, and write now only out of decorum. To be sure every day may produce news from America, but nothing has come since my last. I wish the probability of news may not be opened at a new war-office. The vast preparations in France, exacted as

they pretend by Spain, and not much more comfortable for that, either announce war, may beget it, or at least can easily be blown into a flame. Why we should tempt it, and yet not expect it, is a problem not soluble by my old-fashioned head.

The Duchess of Bristol[1] is returned—to avoid outlawry. The Earl, whom she has made a dowager, talks, and seems to act resolution of being divorced; and the Ecclesiastical Court, who has been as great a whore as either of them, affects to be ashamed, and thunders against the Duchess. In the meantime the Meadowses[2] prosecute the Earl for the whole receipt of the Kingston estate, as her Grace is his Countess. People cry out that the House of Lords cannot grant a divorce after such symptoms of collusion. I beg their pardons; I do not know what the House of Lords cannot do.

Will you take this for a letter? It will, at least, do to keep a place for its predecessor, which was more portly, if not more substantial. If I would stoop to artifice, I could insert a list of so many new Irish lords, that there would be no room to sign my name. But what would you care for a bead-roll of mushrooms, half of whom, like your procession-nobility at Florence[3], will not be gentlemen under a generation or two? They are like the Lord Bateman, whom George I made an Irish peer, to avoid making him a Knight of the Bath; for, said he, 'I can make him a lord, but I cannot make him a gentleman.' Nay, all these earls and barons may be well born for aught I know, but their very number makes them a mob—they are thirty.

What is become of Mrs. Anne Pitt? Lady Lucy Mann, I trust, was in less danger than her husband apprehended.

Letter 1711.—[1] The Duchess of Kingston. *Walpole.*

[2] Nephews of the Duke of Kingston by his only sister, Lady Frances Pierpoint, wife of Mr. Meadows, second son of Sir Philip. *Walpole.*

[3] Citizens ennobled at Florence are allowed to rank as nobles only at processions, till the third generation. *Walpole.*

I have a high opinion of the sea, and am going to try its air myself, for I have not recovered my feet quite yet, and always found singular benefit from sea-breezes, which are all I shall try now, and on shore. One ought to try, though one must not imagine that strength is to return, when one is no boy, as it used to do. I have no such impertinent presumption, and always submit with profound deference to whatever penalties years impose, or that tyrant, the gout. Age has still its comforts. They who disdain them, and insist upon pleasures, do not understand their own interest. The most grievous part of old age is the loss of old friends: they have no succedaneum. Adieu!

17th.

The Duchess of Newcastle[4] died this morning, aged seventy-five. She was perfectly well on Monday night, when she went to bed, was seized between two and three with an apoplexy and total loss of sense, and expired at eleven to-day. I just mention deaths of those you remember. To myself I seem Methuselem, for I can scarcely reckon twenty of those who formed *the world* when I came into it; but, indeed, as my father was minister, I came into it at five years old. Sometimes I think this my second life, so totally is everything changed.

I did flatter myself with being diverted at your surprise from so general an alteration of persons, objects, manners, as you would have found; but there is an end of all that pleasing vision! I remember when my father went out of place, and was to return visits, which ministers are excused from doing, he could not guess where he was, finding himself in so many new streets and squares. This was thirty years ago. They have been building ever since,

[4] Lady Henrietta Godolphin, eldest daughter of the second Earl of Godolphin, by Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough. *Walpole.*

and one would think had imported two or three capitals. London could put Florence into its fob-pocket; but as they build so slightly, if they did not rebuild, it would be just the reverse of Rome, a vast circumference of city surrounding an area of ruins. As its present progress is chiefly north, and Southwark marches south, the metropolis promises to be as broad as long. Rows of houses shoot out every way like a polypus; and, so great is the rage of building everywhere, that, if I stay here a fortnight, without going to town, I look about to see if no new house is built since I went last. America and France must tell us how long this exuberance of opulence is to last! The East Indies, I believe, will not contribute to it much longer. Babylon and Memphis and Rome probably, stared at their own downfall. Empires did not use to philosophize, nor thought much but of themselves. Such revolutions are better known now, and we ought to expect them—I do not say we do. This little island will be ridiculously proud some ages hence of its former brave days, and swear its capital was once as big again as Paris, or—what is to be the name of the city that will then give laws to Europe—perhaps New York or Philadelphia.

1712. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, July 17, 1776.

The enclosed is a charming copy of verses of Voltaire, at least the first part, and *sent bien son ancienne verve.* What a beautiful and pathetic line is

Rit des calamités dont pleurent les provinces,

and how applicable in every Paris! and how applicable just now!

This is not my only business, Madam; I beg you will

send me a recommendatory letter to Mons. Hubert[1] for Mr. Hardinge[2], Lord Camden's nephew, who is going a trip to Geneva. You may truly say he is a very clever, amiable young man, a rising chancellor, if the amiable were rising to be chancellors; and if you like to exaggerate, you may add that he will taste and understand Mons. Hubert, neither of which I believe, no more than if he was the present chancellor; and yet he has taken to me, who am as unlike anything he has seen at the Temple, or on the circuit, as Mons. Hubert, with much less talents. No matter; pray oblige me.

I dined yesterday with Princess Amelie, with the Lords and Ladies Holdernesse, Spencer, Weymouth, the Lords Hertford and Ashburnham, the Ladies Anne Howard, Mary Coke, and Margaret Compton, Mrs. Howe, and Mr. Morrice. We had the finest fruit in the world, I mean in a world where there is fifty times more rain than sun, very little wine, and three long pools at commerce; you may guess if Lord Weymouth was well diverted. Lord and Lady Carmarthen were to have been there, but the Duchess of Newcastle has had a stroke of apoplexy, and lies senseless. As I came home, two footpads, just at the entrance of my own Twickenham, stepped up to my footman on horseback, damned him and bid him stop. Luckily it was not David, but the young fellow, who rode up to the coachman and bid him drive on; and so we shall not make a paragraph in the

LETTER 1712.—[1] Jean Huber (d. about 1790), a native of Geneva. He had artistic tastes, and was particularly clever in cutting out likenesses with scissors.

[2] George Hardinge (1743–1816), son of Nicholas Hardinge, Clerk of the House of Commons, by Jane, daughter of Sir John Pratt, and sister of Lord Camden; Solicitor-General to the Queen, 1782; Attorney-General to the Queen, 1794; Senior Justice of the counties of Brecon, Glamorgan, and Radnor, 1787–1816. Hardinge was known to Horace Walpole as early as 1770, when their correspondence (first published in Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes and Illustrations of Literature*) began. After Hardinge's marriage in 1777 he went to live at Twickenham, in a small house called Ragman's Castle.

newspapers. I expected to hear a pistol calling after us, but the lad saw nothing but a large stick, which one of them held up at him. I shall not send him to America after Lord Winchelsea for his spirit[3].

1713. To the Rev. William Cole.

You are so good to me, my dear Sir, that I am quite ashamed. I must not send back your charming present, but wish you would give me leave to pay for it, and I shall have the same obligation to you, and still more. It is beautiful in form and colours, and pleases me excessively. In the meantime, I have, in a great hurry, for I came home but at noon to meet Mr. Essex, chosen out a few prints for you, such as I think you will like, and beg you to accept them: they enter into no one of my sets.

I am heartily grieved at your account of yourself, and know no comfort but submission. I was absent to see General Conway, who is far from well—we must take our lot as it falls! Joy and sorrow is mixed till the scene closes. I am out of spirits, and shall not mend yours; Mr. Essex is just setting out, and I write in great haste, but am, as I have long been,

Most truly yours,

Strawberry Hill, July 23, 1776. H. W.

1714. To the Rev. William Cole.

Strawberry Hill, July 24, 1776.

I wrote to you yesterday, dear Sir, not only in great haste, but in great confusion, and did not say half I ought to have done for the pretty vase you sent me, and for your constant obliging attention to me. All I can say is, that gratitude attempted, even in my haste and concern, to put

[3] Lord Winchilsea was a volunteer with the King's army in America.

in its word: and I did not mean to pay you (which I hope you will really allow me to do), but to express my sensibility of your kindness.

The fact was, that to avoid disappointing Mr. Essex, when I had dragged him hither from Cambridge, I had returned hither precipitately, and yet late, from Park Place, whither I went the day before to see General Conway, who has had a little attack of the paralytic kind. You, who can remember how very long and dearly I have loved so near a relation and particular friend, and who are full of nothing but gentle and friendly sensations, can judge how shocked I was to find him more changed than I expected. I suffered so much in constraining and commanding myself, that I was not sorry, as the house was full of relations, to have the plea of Mr. Essex, to get away, and come to sigh here by myself. It is, perhaps, to vent my concern that I write now. Mr. Conway is in no manner of danger, is better, his head nor speech are affected, and the physicians, who barely allow the attack to be of the paralytic nature, are clear it is local in the muscles of the face. Still has it operated such a revolution in my mind, as no time, *at my age*, can efface. It has at once damped every pursuit which my spirits had even now prevented me from being weaned from, I mean of virtù. It is like a mortal distemper in myself, for can amusements amuse, if there is but a glimpse, a vision, of outliving one's friends? I have had dreams, in which I thought I wished for fame—it was not certainly posthumous fame at any distance; I feel, I feel it was confined to the memory of those I love. It seems to me impossible for a man who has no friends to do anything for fame—and to me the first position in friendship is, to intend one's friends should survive one—but it is not reasonable to oppress you, who are suffering gout, with my melancholy ideas. Let me know as you mend. What I have said will tell you, what

I hope so many years have told you, that I am very constant and sincere to friends of above forty years.

I doubt Mr. Essex perceived that my mind was greatly bewildered. He gave me a direction to Mr. Penticross[1], who, I recollect, Mr. Gray, not you, told me was turned a Methodist teacher. He was a Blue-coat boy, and came hither then to some of my servants, having at that age a poetic turn. As he has reverted to it, I hope the enthusiasm will take a more agreeable plie. I have not heard of him for many years, and thought he was settled somewhere near Cambridge: I find it is at Wallingford. I wonder those madmen and knaves do not begin to wear out, as their folly is no longer new, and as knavery can turn its hand to any trade, according to the humour of the age, which in countries like this is seldom constant.

Yours most faithfully,

H. W.

1715. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, Aug. 4, 1776.

I shall not go to Park Place till the day after to-morrow, having allowed this interval in hopes of finding a greater amendment. I am glad to find everybody thinks I was too much alarmed. The King said he heard it was a very slight attack, but that I was extremely shocked. I am not at all ashamed of being thought too sensible about my friends.

I do not wonder Mr. C. is so gay. I suppose this *fine season* has raised his spirits. They say it has done Lord G. Germaine great good.

I am still less surprised to hear Lord —— said Mr. Conway could not open his eye without help.

I have seen the man that saw that wondrous sight,

Letter 1714.—[1] A clergyman and schoolmaster.

and should not be surprised if he said he had *seen a comet drop down hail.*

The charade is much better than what I guessed; it is the word *Italien.* Though you do not understand Latin, Madam, you know that *ita* is Latin, and *lien* French,—but perhaps you don't understand French neither.

Pray tell *our* Lord that I found last night, in Dr. King's[1] Works, that Archbishop Laud *or* Sir John Robinson, who I think was our Lord's grandfather, left 100*l.* to whoever would translate Laud's book against Fisher[2] into Latin. I hope the Prelate's self-love was the donor, and not the martial gentleman in the parlour. There is a great deal of the petty history of Queen Anne's reign in that Dr. King's Works, and yet it requires my perseverance to read three volumes of small print, in which is so much trash. The man had some sense, a great deal more reading, and some humour, but the latter is very vulgar, and pertly vulgar, the worst sort; and oftener fails than succeeds. Then it is the humour of a bigot, who always laughs when he is ill-humoured, and who thinks he must be comical, if the Bible is on his side, for what really makes a bigot laugh is, that he flatters himself his adversary will be damned. King was besides a jester on the side of Sacheverel and against liberty, in an age when our ancestors had too much sense to be joked into slavery. I am not surprised that this new edition of his works is published now: his humour, though stale, has a better chance of success than even when it was fresh. His biographer says he was sullen, morose, peevish, said many ill-natured things, was drunken, religious, and strictly virtuous, a complete character of a High Church

LETTER 1715.—[1] William King, LL.D. (1685–1763), Principal of St. Mary Hall, Oxford, 1719–63. He was at the head of the Jacobite party in Oxford.

[2] John Fisher (1579–1641), a Jesuit. He disputed on the Catholic faith with Laud in the presence of James I. Laud and Fisher afterwards wrote pamphlets referring to this conference.

saint! To prevent your dipping into his verses, I will advertise you that he was an execrable poet, and at the end of his first volume recommends a republication of fifty thousand verses still more wretched than his own; at the same time advising a translation of our poets into Latin, to give foreigners an idea of our poetry! I beg your Ladyship's pardon for saying so much on a trumpery author, but I have no news, and he was new to me.

1716. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 11, 1776.

I have so little to tell you, though, perhaps, at the eve of so much, that I shall, I think, only begin this letter to show you the constancy of my attention, but not send it till it is fuller.

You have seen by the public newspapers that General Carleton has driven the provincials out of all Canada. It is well he fights better than he writes! General Conway has constantly said that he would do great service. The provincials revenge themselves on our ships, took nine Jamaica-men at once, and have just taken two transports with troops; besides half or three quarters starving our West India Islands. General Howe has left Halifax since the beginning of June, on an expedition. Near a fortnight ago, he was heard of off New York, and great anxiety was afloat to know farther. Yesterday came letters that he had landed on an island[1] near, without molestation, but learnt that the opposite coast was covered with an hundred cannon, behind which lay a strong army entrenched up to their eyes. This does not diminish the anxiety for the event. His brother, the peer, had not joined him; not that there are appearances promising negotiation. The

Letter 1716.—[1] Staten Island.

Congress has declared all the provinces independent[2], has condemned the Mayor of New York to be hanged for corresponding with their enemies, and have seized Franklin, not the famous doctor, but one of the King's governors. I hope this savage kind of war will not proceed; but they seem to be very determined, and that makes the prospect very melancholy.

I have been much alarmed lately about General Conway, who, by a sudden cold, had something of a paralytic stroke in the face; but as it did not affect his speech or health, and is almost disappeared, I am much easier. I do not know whether I have not mentioned it to you already: I cannot always remember from one post to another what I have said. He is uneasy himself, with reason, about his daughter. Her husband[3] and his two brothers have contracted a debt —one can scarcely expect to be believed out of England— of seventy thousand pounds! Who but must think himself happy to marry a daughter with only ten thousand pounds to a young man with five thousand pounds a year rent-charge in present, and twenty-two thousand a year settled? And yet this daughter at present is ruined! Her behaviour is such as her father's would be; she does not only not complain, but desires her very own jewels may be sold. The young men of this age seem to have made a law amongst themselves for declaring their fathers superannuated at fifty, and then dispose of the estates, as if already their own.

How culpable to society was Lord Holland[4] for setting an example of paying such enormous, such gigantic debts! Can you believe that Lord Foley's two sons[5] have borrowed

[2] The Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776.

[3] John Damer, eldest son of Joseph, Lord Milton, married Anne, only child of General Henry Seymour Conway. *Walpole.*

[4] Henry Fox, first Lord Holland. *Walpole.*

[5] Thomas and Edward, sons of the first Lord Foley of that line. *Walpole.*

money so extravagantly, that the interest they have contracted to pay amounts to eighteen thousand pounds a year? I write the sum at length, lest you should think I have mistaken, and set down two or three figures too much. The legislature sits quiet, and says it cannot put a stop to such outrageous doings; but thus is it punished for winking at the plunder of the Indies, which cannot suffice. Our Jews and usurers contrive to lounge at home, and commit as much rapine as Lord Clive!

Wednesday, 14th.

I must desire you to send me a letter to Mr. William Suckling, our deputy, desiring him to execute the office of collector for you, and pay our moneys to my brother and me. This is not essential, but I find it will be a satisfaction to him, and I know you will be so good as to do it. Now I will bid you good night, but will reserve the rest of my paper a few days, rather than leave you in this suspense. If nothing comes soon, I shall hope some negotiation is on foot that will stop the effusion of blood—but indeed such various frenzies have taken hold of the nation's brains, that I fear nothing but calamities will bring us to our senses.

As I doubt whether we shall hear any considerable news soon, I have determined to send away this letter, lest it should be superannuated. The *Gazette* has already got the start of it, and told you all it pretended to tell. In truth, my letters are little more than companions of the newspapers, or at best evidences for their veracity, which *they* want. It is incredible how both sides lie about the American war. Even that laconic personage the *Gazette* has been known to fib, and always takes care not to tell a syllable of bad news. I live here alone, and never hear any but with all the world. Whenever this war shall end, I believe it will be very new; for except two or three great facts,

Lord Clive

from a painting by Nathaniel Dance, R.A.

I question whether we, the public, know anything of the matter.

1717. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 16, 1776.

I cannot answer your Ladyship's questions from any Parisian authority, for my dear old woman, who does not trouble her head about the court, seldom tells me anything but what relates to her own circle. I have heard here of the favour of my Lady Lucan, and having the same curiosity as your Ladyship, have inquired, but the answer is not come. I know still less of Lord Clermont's[1] successor: it certainly is not Lord Dillon's son[2], who is marrying Miss Phipps, for love, at Brussels. He has a cousin at Paris, a beau Dillon[3], and a fine dancer. If Lady Lucan has made such a conquest by her painting, I think I, who was her master, ought at least to be a minister.—But I doubt my fate will resemble me to some prince, I forget whom, whose tomb they show at Westminster Abbey, who was son, brother, uncle, and father of kings, but never was king himself[4].

No, Madam, I shall not go to Brighthelmstone, but another journey that will at least vary the scene a little, for Lady Di. I have asked my nephew's leave to show them Houghton, and to Mr. Conway and Lady Ailesbury.

Letter 1717.—[1] William Henry Fortescue (1722–1806), first Baron Clermont, created Earl of Clermont in 1777.

[2] Hon. Charles Dillon, afterwards Dillon-Lee (1745–1813), eldest son of eleventh Viscount Dillon, whom he succeeded in 1782; m. (1776) Hon. Henrietta Maria Phipps, daughter of first Baron Mulgrave.

[3] Colonel Édouard Dillon (1751–1839), son of a banker in Bordeaux; Colonel of the regiment of Provence, and Gentleman-in-Waiting to the Comte d'Artois. He was a favourite of Marie Antoinette.

[4] The personage who appears to answer this description most nearly is Edmund Plantagenet (1246–1296), surnamed 'Crouchback,' Earl of Lancaster, who is buried on the north side of the Sanctuary in Westminster Abbey, nearest the high altar. He was son of Henry III, brother of Edward I, uncle of Edward II, and great-great-grandfather of Henry IV.

I do not speak positively, you perceive. I must have permission first.

You may be sure I enter very much, Madam, into your sensations about Miss Vernon's trip to Winterslow Lodge, and approve your consenting to it. One cannot hinder others from doing what one wishes they did not, when they are not in the wrong for doing it; and yet I know one still wishes it did not happen. You can meet with nobody that feels this more than I do; but one must conquer oneself on those occasions. It is difficult, I own; but as nobody feels exactly what one feels oneself upon all situations, it is not reasonable to prescribe rules to them from one's own disposition: and yet, though I preach, I admire your fortitude in not having wanted to be preached to; nor is the preacher always so equitable himself. I am sorry you are losing Mr. James. I know what a loss it is to miss a person whose opinions agree with one's own. I will not preach on this chapter too, for I am sure my practice would not be conformable to my doctrine.

Mr. Conway is visibly much mended; and though my impatience is not satisfied yet, in all probability no traces of his disorder will remain. His countenance is quite come to itself; and his disposition was so little disturbed, that in one of the rainy days I passed there, he employed all the morning in cleaning his own boat. He is as indifferent about the accident, and talks of it with as much unconcern as if he had only been out on a skirmishing party.

Friday, 16th.

I began this yesterday, and was interrupted. To-day I have heard the shocking news of Mr. Damer's death, who shot himself yesterday, at three o'clock in the morning, at a tavern in Covent Garden. My first alarm was for Mr. Conway; not knowing what effect such a horrid

surprise would have on him, scarce recovered from an attack himself; happily it proves his nerves were not affected, for I have had a very calm letter from him on the occasion. They have sent for me to town, and I shall go to-morrow morning. Mr. Charles Fox, with infinite good nature, met Mrs. Damer coming to town, and stopped her to prepare her for the dismal event. It is almost impossible to refrain from bursting out into commonplace reflections on this occasion; but can the walls of Almack's help moralizing, when 5,000*l.* a year in present and 22,000*l.* in reversion are not sufficient for happiness, and cannot check a pistol!

For the first time in my life I think I do not wish Lord Ossory a son, or Lady Anne greatly married! What a distracted nation! I do not wonder Dr. Battie died worth 100,000*l.* Will anybody be worth a shilling but mad doctors? I could write volumes; but recollect that you are not alone as I am, given up to melancholy ideas, with the rain beating on the skylight, and gusts of wind. On other nights, if I heard a noise, I should think it was some desperate gamester breaking open my house; now, every flap of a door is a pistol. I have often said, this world is a comedy to those that think, a tragedy to those that feel; but when I thought so first, I was more disposed to smile than to feel; and besides, England was not arrived at its present pitch of frenzy. I begin to doubt whether I have not lived in a system of errors. All my ideas are turned topsy-turvy. One must go to some other country and ask whether one has a just notion of anything. To me, everybody round me seems lunatic; yet I think they were sober and wise folks from whom I received all my notions, on money, politics, and what not. Well! I will wait for the echo—I know no better oracle. Good night, Madam. You excuse me in any mood, and therefore I will make no

apology for this incoherent rhapsody. My thoughts, with those I love, always flow according to the cast of the hour. A good deal of sensibility and very shattered nerves expose one to strong impressions. Yet when the sages of this world affect a tenderness they do not know, may not a little real feeling be pardoned? It seems, Mentor Duke of Montagu had made a vow of ever wearing weepers for his vixen turtle, and it required a jury of matrons and divines to persuade him he would not go to the devil and his wife, if he appeared in scarlet and gold on the Prince's birthday; but he is returned to close mourning like Hamlet, and every Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is edified both ways.

1718. To the Rev. William Cole.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 19, 1776.

I have time but to write you a line, and it is as usual to beg your help in a sort of literary difficulty. I have received a letter dated *Catherine Hall* from *Ken. Prescot*[1], whom I doubt I have forgotten; for he begins, 'Dear Sir,' and I protest I cannot recollect him, though I ought. He says he wants to send me a few classical discourses, and he speaks with respect of my father; and, by his trembling hand, seems an old man. All these are reasons for treating him with great regard, and being afraid of hurting him, I have written a short and very civil answer, directed to the *Rev. Dr. Prescot.* God knows whether he is a clergyman or a doctor—and perhaps I may have betrayed my forgetfulness; but I thought it was best to err on the over-civil side. Tell me something about him: I dread his *Discourses.* Is he the strange man that a few years ago sent me a volume of an uncommon form, and of more uncommon matter? I suspect so.

Letter 1718.—[1] Master of Catherine Hall, Cambridge.

You shall certainly have two or three of my prints by Mr. Essex when he returns hither and hence, and anything else you will command. I am just now in great concern for the terrible death of General Conway's son-in-law, Mr. Damer, of which, perhaps, you in your solitude have not heard. You are happy who take no part but in the past world, for the *mortui non mordent*, nor do any of the extravagant and distressing things that perhaps they did in their lives. I hope the gout, that persecutes even in a hermitage, has left you.

Yours most sincerely,

H. W.

1719. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 20, 1776.

You will have concluded, on the sight of another letter so soon, that you are to hear of a battle in America. Not so, though you are going to hear a dismal story, and, which is worse, relative to friends of mine. Indeed the newspapers will have told it to you already, and you have known the principal actor, Mr. Damer, Lord Milton's eldest son, and who married General Conway's only daughter. I think I told you in my last that he and his two brothers most unexpectedly notified to their father that they owed above seventy thousand pounds. The proud lord, for once in the right, refused to pay the debt, or see them. The two eldest were to retire to France, and Mrs. Damer was to accompany them, without a murmur, and with the approbation, though to the great grief, of Mr. Conway and Lady Ailesbury. She was, luckily, gone to take her leave of them, and to return to town last Friday morning. On Thursday, Mr. Damer supped at the Bedford Arms in Covent Garden, with four common women, a blind fiddler, and no other man. At three

in the morning he dismissed his seraglio, bidding each receive her guinea at the bar, and ordering Orpheus to come up again in half an hour. When he returned, he found a dead silence, and smelt gunpowder. He called, the master of the house came up, and found Mr. Damer sitting in his chair, dead, with a pistol by him, and another in his pocket! The ball had not gone through his head, nor made any report. On the table lay a scrap of paper with these words, 'The people of the house are not to blame for what has happened, which was my own act.' This was the sole tribute he paid to justice and decency!

What a catastrophe for a man at thirty-two, heir to two-and-twenty thousand a year! We are persuaded lunacy, not distress, was the sole cause of his fate. He has often, and even at supper that night, hinted at such an exploit—the very reason why one should not expect it. His brothers have gamed—he never did. He was grave, cool, reasonable, and reserved; but passed his life as he died, with troops of women and the blind fiddler—an odd companion in such scenes! One good springs out of this evil, the leeches, the Jews and extortioners, will lose very considerably. Lord Milton, whom anything can petrify and nothing soften, will not only not see his remaining sons, but wreaks his fury on Mrs. Damer, though she deserves only pity, and shows no resentment. He insists on selling her jewels, which are magnificent, for discharge of just debts. This is all the hurt he can do her; she must have her jointure of 2,500*l.* a year.

We have no end of these examples of extravagance. There is a Lord Coleraine and his two brothers[1], who have equalled the Damers, and almost the Foxes and Foleys. Their father, who died about two years ago, was apprised of their proceedings, and left all he could, 1,600*l.* a year,

LETTER 1719.—[1] Hon. William and Hon. George Hanger.

to his wife[2]. The unnatural wretches have wheedled her out of all, and Lady Windsor[3] has taken her into her house for subsistence! Very lately they told her she must come to town on business:—it was to show her to the Jews, and convince them hers was a good life—unless she is starved. You must not suppose that such actions are disapproved, for the second brother is going minister[4] to Brussels, that he may not go to jail, whither he ought to go. I am weary of relating such histories. You shall hear no more of them, for my letters would be the annals of Bedlam. Adieu!

22nd.

Since I wrote my letter, an account is come of the total failure of the expedition under General Clinton, Lord Cornwallis, and Sir Peter Parker[5], against Charleston[6]. The troops landed on Long Island[7], and then could not act. The fleet attacked a fort, were repulsed, lost a man-of-war, with a captain, lieutenant, and two hundred men, and Sir Peter Parker, they say, is wounded in six places. They were, besides, forced to burn a store-ship. The provincials are confessed to have behaved remarkably well. This success will not discourage the rest. In what a chaos are we embarked!

[2] Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Richard Bond, of Cowbery, Herefordshire, and widow of first Baron Coleraine; d. 1780.

[3] Alice Clavering, sister and heiress of Sir James Clavering, fourth Baronet, of Axwell, Durham, and widow of second Viscount Windsor; d. Nov. 24, 1776.

[4] He did not go. *Walpole.*

[5] Admiral Sir Peter Parker, Knight (1721–1811), created a Baronet in 1782. He had recently been appointed to command a squadron which was to act on the North American coast.

[6] The attack was made on June 28, 1776. The state of the tide prevented both troops and ships from acting to advantage against the batteries on Sullivan's Island. Three frigates ran aground, and one was set on fire and abandoned.

[7] A few miles to the north-east of Sullivan's Island.

1720. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 22, 1776.

I perceive at last, Madam, that it is very foolish to live out of the world, and a good deal alone; one contracts the strongest prejudices! one fancies one grows old, because one is near threescore; that it is absurd to lay plans for ten or twenty years hence; that one shall not govern the next generation as one did their grandfathers and grandmothers; in short, one imagines one is not immortal. Nay, though there never was an age in which youth thought it so right to anticipate all its prerogatives, and declare its veterans Strulbrugs a little before our time, we silly folks in the country despair of recovering the province of wisdom, that is, keeping young people for ever in leading strings, while we enjoy the world and dispose of all its blessings over our bottle.

The picture of St. George[1] has opened my eyes. I will launch into the world again, and propose to be Prime Minister to King George V, and lay a plan for governing longer than Cardinal Fleury, by surfeiting all the young nobility at Eton and Westminster Schools with sugar-plums. In the meantime if I grow deaf, like the late or present governor[2], I will have Master George V taught to talk to me upon his fingers, which will teach both him and me to spell, for it would not be proper to have him bawling secrets of state to me through a speaking-trumpet: and when I come to be minister[3], I will secure the attachment of all the young senators by getting drunk with them

Letter 1720.—[1] Reynolds' picture of St. George and the Dragon, with portraits of the fifth Duke of Bedford, his two brothers, and Miss Vernon. It was painted for Richard Rigby.

[2] The Earl of Holdernesse and the Duke of Montagu.

[3] An allusion to Earl Gower, President of the Council.

every night till six in the morning; and if I should never be sober enough to give away places, which is the only real business of a minister, I will marry a Scotch wife[4], who shall think of nothing else. I will do still more, and what no minister yet could ever compass, I will prevent all clamour, by adopting St. George's motto,—*Honi soit qui mal y pense*, which, if inscribed on the picture now in agitation, will certainly hinder anybody's smiling at it. As one cannot entirely divest oneself of one's character,

But find the ruling passion strong in death,

I propose to conclude my career in a manner worthy of an antiquary, as I was in the last century, and when I am satiated with years and honours, and arrived at a comfortable old age, to break my neck out of a cherry-tree in robbing an orchard, like the Countess of Desmond at an hundred and forty; but don't mention this last idea, Madam, lest that roguish lad, the First Lord of the Admiralty[5], should steal the thought from me.

Thursday evening.

I scribbled the above this morning on receiving your Ladyship's letter, and have since been at the regatta at Richmond, which was the prettiest and foolishest sight in the world, as all regattas are. The scene, which lay between the Duke of Montagu's and Lady Cowper's, is so beautiful, that, with its shores covered with multitudes, and the river with boats, in the finest of all evenings, nothing could be more delightful. The King and Queen were on a stage on their own terrace: there were but few

[4] Lord Gower's third wife was Lady Susan Stewart, daughter of the Earl of Galloway. 'After her marriage her life was a series of jobs and solicitations, and she teased every minister for every little office that fell in his department.' (*Last Journals*, vol. i. p. 233.)

[5] Lord Sandwich.

barges and streamers, except one of the Duke of Newcastle's, and nobody more in masquerade than they are every day; but enough of a puppet-show.

The echo is a very discreet personage, and never in a hurry. Ministers are not invulnerable, as you thought. The expedition against Charleston has failed. A man-of-war is lost, with a captain, a lieutenant, and two hundred men, and, as Lord Cranley [6] told me, Sir Peter Parker himself is wounded in six places. They were forced besides to burn a store-ship; and what is ten times worse, *the cowardly rebels* behaved remarkably well. It is called a very ill-advised attempt; though ten days ago what bragging of having got a fifty-gun ship over the bar of Charleston, which had always been thought impossible!

I cannot tell whether I shall go to Houghton, till I know what Mr. Conway determines. The Beauclerks certainly do not go. Mr. Crawfurd sent me a messenger last Friday to tell me the horrid fate of Mr. Damer, and to say he should not see me unless I was in town on Sunday. As I went on the unhappy occasion, I sent to him—and he was out of town. I should not have gone on purpose, as I know him a little too well.

Adieu! Madam; say nothing, and wait for the echo still —to the end of the year. What she says then will be important.

P.S. You may be perfectly easy about Lord Chewton [7], for the land forces could not act, though they disembarked on Long Island,—a very ingenious exploit!

[6] George Onslow, created on May 20, 1776, Baron Cranley of Imbercourt, in Surrey.

[7] George Waldegrave (1751–1789), Viscount Chewton, eldest son of third Earl Waldegrave, whom he succeeded in 1784. He entered the army in 1768, and was at this time serving with his regiment in America.

1721. To the Rev. William Cole.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 9, 1776.

May I trouble you, dear Sir, when you see our friend Mr. Essex, to tell him that the tower is covered in, and that whenever he has nothing to do, after this week, I shall be very glad to see him here, if he will only send me a line two or three days beforehand. I have carried this little tower higher than the round one, and it has an exceedingly pretty effect, breaking the long line of the house picturesquely, and looking very ancient, thus[1]. I wish this, or anything else could tempt you hither.

I must correct a little error in the spelling of a name in the pedigree you was so kind as to make cut for me last year; the Derehaughs were not of Colton, but Coulston Hall. This I discovered oddly this morning. On opening a patch-box that belonged to my mother, and which I have not opened for many years, I found an extremely small silver collar or ring, about this size[2], but broad and flat. I remember it was in an old satin bag of coins that my mother found in old Houghton when she first married. I call it a collar from the breadth; for it would not be large enough for a fairy's lap-dog. It was probably made for an infant's little finger, and must have been for a ring, not a collar, for I believe, though she was an heiress, young ladies did not elope so early in those days. I never knew how it came into the family, but now it is plain, for the inscription on the outside is, *of Coulston Hall, Suff.*, and it is a confirmation of your pedigree. I have tied it to a piece of paper, with a long inscription; and as it is so small, it will not be melted down for the weight; and if not lost from

Letter 1721.—[1] The original letter contains a drawing of the tower.
[2] Drawing in the original letter.

its diminutive person, may remain in the family a long while, and be preserved when some gamester may spend every other bit of silver he has in the world—at least, if one would make heirlooms now, one must take care that they have no value in them[3]. I fancy Mrs. Prescott is returned, for I have heard no more of the Doctor[4].

I wish you may be able to tell me your gout is gone.

Yours ever,

H. W.

P.S. I was turning over Edmondson this evening, and observed an odd concurrence of circumstances in the present Lord Carmarthen. By his mother he is the representative of the great Duke of Marlborough, and of Lord Treasurer Godolphin; by his father, of the Lord Treasurer Duke of Leeds; and by his grandmother[5], is descended from the Lord Treasurer Oxford. Few men are so well ancestored in so short a compass of time.

1722. To the Rev. William Mason.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 17, 1776.

I was exceedingly rejoiced the other day to hear by a letter from Lord Strafford that you are alive, which I doubted. I had some thoughts of looking into the *Annual Register* to see if your preferments were given away; but as I find you have only been in a lethargy, and that now I shall not disturb your nap, I venture to put you in mind of a person of whom you have not dreamt these four or

[3] The ring described above, together with the inscription in Walpole's handwriting, is now in possession of Earl Waldegrave at Chewton Priory.

[4] Cole had informed Walpole that Dr. Prescot was mentally deranged, and had written to Horace Walpole (see letter to Cole of Aug. 19, 1776) during his wife's absence.

[5] Lady Elizabeth Harley (d. 1713), daughter of first Earl of Oxford; m. (1712) Peregrine Osborne, Marquis of Carmarthen, afterwards third Duke of Leeds.

five months. This has not been my case, though I have given you no more signs of life. I have been going to write to you fifty times, and only waited for that *small peculiar* of a letter, something to say. I hope you have had no other reason for silence. My want is not yet removed, but though a good excuse for a letter's being short, is not above half a reason for not writing at all. Swinny used to tell a story of two old companions, who sitting together one evening till it was quite dark, without speaking, one called to t'other, 'Tom, Tom.' 'Well,' said his friend, 'what do you say?' 'Oh,' said t'other, 'are you there?' 'Ay,' said the friend. 'Why then don't you say *humph*?' said the first. If I had been in Parliament, and could have franked 'humph,' I really should have written it before now, though General Howe, who, like his family, never wastes a monosyllable, does not think such little amities necessary. Perhaps he reflects that even that symptom of life would not be communicated to the public, who, it seems, have no business to know anything that happens out of their own island. Master Froissart says, 'By the famous wrytyng of auncient auctours all thynges ben knowen in one place or other[1],' which is a great comfort, and the present age seems to be satisfied with what their posterity will know.

I have lately met with a famous auncient auctour, who did not think that everybody ought to know everything. He is a classic, Sir, with whom you ought to be acquainted; his very name is expressive of his vocation and science; he was called *Sir Hugh Plat*[2], and has written a tractate on gardening, called the *Garden of Eden*, a very proper title, for though he has planted a tree of knowledge, he

Letter 1722. — [1] This sentence occurs in the first chapter of Lord Berners' translation.

[2] Plat was knighted by James I, and died about 1611.

forbids it to be tasted, having concealed his principal secret in a figurative description in imitation of Baptista Porta[3] in his *Natural Magic*, so that you might as soon understand a book of Alchemy, as Sir Hugh's treatise, at least his secret. This deep volume is not quite to your purpose, not being an essay on landscape-gardens, but rules to improve fruit and flowers, which being still more the fashionable rage at present than laying out ground, I think you would do well, Mr. Mason, to add a book on that subject. One very great secret Sir Hugh has deigned to disclose; it is a receipt for making a peach-tree bring forth pomegranates: the process is very simple, and consists in nothing but watering (or strictly speaking milking) the peach-tree with goat's milk for three days together.

To be sure you want to know a great deal about me myself, though you forgot you did. My whole history consists in having built a new tower, which is a vast deal higher, but very little larger in diameter than an extinguisher; however, it fully answers the founder's intention, which is to hold Lady Di's drawings. Have you done as much in your way, or any way? I could send you a paltry scurrilous letter against Shakespeare, by Voltaire, but it is not worth sending; if it did, you don't deserve it at my hands, so adieu!

1723. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 20, 1776.

You almost confess by your last that you have a little suspected me of having relaxed my veteran punctuality. I doubt your suspicions will have been augmented, for how can you conceive that at so critical a moment, and with so much reason to expect events, six whole weeks will have

[3] Giovanni Battista Porta (d. 1615), a Neapolitan scientific writer.

intervened to-morrow since the letters that brought an account of General Howe being landed on Staten Island in the face of New York? The disgraceful miscarriage of Charleston has come since—but not a syllable from General Howe—not even that his brother has joined him; nor is it known what is become of Lord Howe. The public are impatient, you may be sure: in the ministers it is more than impatience. Yet those no-events are all I could have sent you. The despair from hearing nothing does amount to the importance of an article; and when I have told you that, I have said all I know.

Sir William Hamilton is arrived, and I expect he will call on me here in a day or two. I don't know whether he passed through Florence.

You ask, what is become of the Duchess of Kingston? I have just heard of her, having met Lady Harriet Vernon[1], who is returned from Paris, and saw her there at the Colisée[2], with a hat and feathers like Henri Quatre. She has given orders for a palace to be taken for her in Paris. At Calais she has a guard at her door, having demanded it, on pretence that her enemies aimed at her life. She obtained it, and has detained it to this moment. Her foolish vanity, you see, will never leave her. I think your Lord Cowper is not much wiser. I should not wonder at his retaining the mob[3], if Florence were a borough town. It would be a sort of poetic justice[4], if he should send his son[5] to England, and the boy should refuse to return to

LETTER 1723.—[1] Youngest sister of William Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, and Lady of the Bedchamber to Princess Amelia. *Walpole.*

[2] The French Ranelagh. *Walpole.*

[3] To celebrate the birth of his son Lord Cowper caused quantities of bread to be distributed to the poor of two of the parishes of Florence.

[4] Lord Cowper, from the moment he went to travel, would not return to England, but settled at Florence, and though entreated in the most earnest manner, would not visit his father before the latter's death. *Walpole.*

[5] George Augustus Clavering-Cowper (1776–1799), Viscount Fordwich; succeeded his father as fifth Earl Cowper in 1789.

him. I am sorry other climates cannot repair the eccentricities our own climate occasions.

I am inclined to think you will hear good news of Lady Lucy, as she holds out so long. I heartily wish you may.

I shall reserve the rest of my paper, as my letter cannot begin its journey till the 24th, for any news that may happen to arrive in the interim. When I appear remiss, you may be certain I have nothing to tell you. Being so totally idle, it would be unpardonable to be lazy too, when you depend on my correspondence. When it has been so constant above thirty years, it shall not disgrace itself in its old age.

22nd.

The ministers have heard by a ship that met another ship at sea, that Lord Howe has joined his brother, and that they were preparing to make the attempt on New York. This may be so, and is not improbable; but such roundabout intelligence may not be true neither.

I have received another letter from you to-day of the 7th with the enclosed for Mr. Suckling, which will do very well, and certainly satisfy him.

Adieu! till there is something to tell you.

1724. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 22, 1776.

I am much obliged to Lord Ossory, Madam, and certainly do not mean to steal a visit to Ampthill in his absence. I shall not be able to see it this month, for I am waiting for Mr. Essex to finish my new tower, which, as my farmer said, is still older than any of the rest.

Pray don't think I am tired of your stories. Nothing is so pleasant as the occurrences of society in a letter. I am always regretting in my correspondence with Madame du

Deffand and Sir Horace Mann, that I must not make use of them, as the one has never lived in England, and the other not these fifty years, and so any private stories would want notes as much as Petronius. Sir Horace and I have no acquaintance in common but the Kings and Queens of Europe.

I don't know that the Governor was literally writing to Lord Rockingham; but not having succeeded in his last tergiversation, and being a little disappointed too by the fall of my Lord of Chester[1], he has been all this summer a violent anti-courtier, till finding that Lord George[2] was discontent with the other ministers, and that Lady George wanted a loo party, he and his chameleon have attached themselves there, and swear *by George*, like my Lord Hertford.

It is charming, I own, to have dancing spirits, like the Duchess of Queensberry, in the 16th lustrum; but I don't think if I had, that I should have courage to make use of them. I am strangely afraid of being too young of my age. If everybody was an hundred, and I was only ninety, I would play at marbles, if I liked it, because my seniors would say, 'That poor young creature!' but the sound of 'That old fool!' is too dreadful: and to live upon the memory of what one has been, when nobody remembers it but oneself, is still worse. It is odd, that grey hairs, and dim eyes, and aches should not be sufficient, but that many want a monitor like Saladin's to cry 'Remember you grow old.'

Do you know, Madam, that the ministers firmly believe, from the captain of a ship that met another ship at sea, that Lord Howe has joined his brother, and they were

LETTER 1724.—[1] Markham, Bishop of Chester, recently dismissed from the post of Preceptor to the Prince of Wales.
[2] Lord George Germain.

preparing to storm New York. The circumstances are no doubt very probable; but should you believe that the silent Howes communicated their intentions to a passenger that was walking by at sea? The General has been profoundly taciturn for six weeks, and I don't think that, in that family, two negative reserves make an affirmative chattering.

Guessing I don't love, because I seldom guess right, but I have something that is called a *presentiment*, that tells me we shall hear of something called a *negotiation*. I could give something like reasons for my opinion, but as I always give up anything rather than dispute, it would be inconvenient to my acquiescent system to furnish myself with arguments, which serve no purpose but to make one obstinate to one's opinion. When one believes without consideration, there is no difficulty in changing sentiments.

Sir William Hamilton called on me yesterday for a moment; he is going to Warwick Castle for a fortnight, and I hope will return charmed with his new niece [3].

1725. To the Rev. William Mason.

Arlington Street, Oct. 8, 1776.

I answer your letter incontinently, because I am charmed with your idea of the cenotaph for Gray, and would not have it wait a moment for my approbation. I do not know what my lines [1] were, for I gave them to you, or have burnt or lost them, but I am sure yours are ten times better, as anything must naturally be when you and I write on the same subject. I prefer Westminster Abbey to Stoke, or Pembroke Chapel; not because due to Gray, whose genius does not want any such distinction, but as due to Westminster

[3] Sir William Hamilton was uncle of the Earl of Warwick, who had recently married Miss Henrietta Vernon, half-sister of Lord Ossory.

Letter 1725.—[1] The lines sent by Horace Walpole to Mason shortly after Gray's death. See letter to Mason of Sept. 9, 1771.

Abbey, which would miss him, and to humble the French, who have never had a Homer or a Pindar, nor probably will have, since Voltaire could make nothing more like an epic poem than the *Henriade*, and Boileau and Rousseau have succeeded so little in odes, that the French still think that ballad-wright Quinault[2] their best lyric poet; which shows how much they understand lyric poetry! Voltaire has lately written a letter against Shakespeare (occasioned by the new paltry translation, which still has discovered his miraculous powers), and it is as downright Billingsgate as an apple-woman would utter if you overturned her wheelbarrow. Poor old wretch! how envy disgraces the brightest talents! How Gray adored Shakespeare! Partridge[3], the almanac-maker, perhaps, was jealous of Sir Isaac Newton. Dr. Goldsmith told me he himself envied Shakespeare, but Goldsmith was an idiot, with once or twice a fit of parts. It hurts one when a real genius like Voltaire can feel more spite than admiration, though I am persuaded that his rancour is grounded on his conscious inferiority. I wish you would lash this old scorpion a little, and teach him awe of English poets.

I can tell you nothing more than you see in the common newspapers. Impatience is open-mouthed and open-eared for accounts from New York, on which the attack was to be made on the 26th of August. Success there is more necessary to keep up credit than likely to do more. Should it fail, there is an end of America for England; and if it succeeds, it is at most ground for another campaign. But we choose not to see till we feel, though they who have done the mischief do not disguise their apprehensions. The colonies have an agent[4] openly at Versailles, and their ships are as openly received into their ports. But I had rather

[2] Philippe Quinault (1635–1688). [3] John Partridge (1644–1715).
[4] Silas Deane, of Connecticut.

talk of *Caractacus*[5]; I agree that he will not suffer by not being sputtered by Barry, who has lost all his teeth. Covent Garden is rather above Drury Lane in actors, though both sets are exceedingly bad, so bad—that I almost wish *Caractacus* was not to appear. Very seldom do I go to the play, for there is no bearing such strollers. I saw *Lear* the last time Garrick played it, and as I told him I was more shocked at the rest of the company than pleased with him —which I believe was not just what he desired; but to give a greater brilliancy to his own setting, he had selected the very worst performers of his troop; just as Voltaire would wish there were no better poets than Thomson and Akenside. However, as *Caractacus* has already been read, I do not doubt but it will succeed. It would be a horrible injury to let him be first announced by such unhallowed mouths. In truth, the present taste is in general so vile, that I don't know whether it is not necessary to blunt real merit before it can be applauded.

I have not time to say more: I can say nothing about law, but that I always avoid it if I can; that and everything else wants reformation, and I believe we shall have it from that only reformer, Adversity. I wish I were with you and the good *Palsgrave*, and I always wish you was with me. Adieu!

Yours ever,
H. W.

1726. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 9, 1776.

Somebody, I know not whom, taking me for your Ladyship's postman instead of your gazetteer, I confess, without

[5] Mason's play of that name, produced at Covent Garden Theatre on Dec. 1, 1776.

degrading me, has sent me the enclosed letter for you. As the postmark is Genève, I should have supposed it came from Monsieur Hubert; but as he can never have heard of me but from your Ladyship, he cannot be such an oaf as to think a letter would find me sooner than you, and, besides, he must know your direction. In short, it is like Anthony Henley's[1] direction to the Duke of Somerset over against the trunk-shop at Charing Cross, except that in the present case the trunk-shop is very angry at the impertinence to the Duke of Somerset.

I am quite alone and wishing myself at Ampthill. I did not think Mr. Essex could have come *mal-à-propos*, but it is so difficult to get him, and he has built me a tower, so exactly of the fourteenth century, that I did not dare to put him off, lest it should not be ready for furnishing next spring. It is one of those tall thin Flemish towers, that are crowned with a roof like an extinguisher, and puts one in mind of that at Thornbury, called *Buckingham's Plotting Closet*. I hope no Cardinal Wolsey will sit on my skirts for the likeness.

I have lately been lent two delicious large volumes of Queen Elizabeth's jewels, plate, and the New Year's gifts to her: every page of one of them is signed by Lord Burleigh. She had more gold and silver plate than Montezuma, and even of her father's plunder of cathedrals and convents, particularly rich mitres set with jewels, and I don't doubt but she sometimes wore them as head of the Church, and fancied herself like Pope Joan. I have extracted some of the articles that are most curious, and here they are.

A looking-glass with the *steel* of agate. (This shows they had no quicksilvered glass, and she must have looked delightfully fierce in a piece of polished steel.) But this was of agate; and the glass was of beryl, and had her mother,

Letter 1726.—[1] Antony Henley (d. 1711), wit and politician.

Anne Boleyn's arms. What a treasure this would be at Strawberry!

A porringer of white purselyn (porcelain) garnished with gold, and a lion at top. (The first porcelain I have read of was in Queen Mary's reign.)

One case of leather painted and gilt with the Duke of Northumberland's (Dudley's) arms, having therein one broad knife, one lesser, two forks, and seven small knives, the hafts of all being silver, enamelled with his arms and word (motto).

One standish of mother-of-pearl, garnished with silver gilt, with three boxes for ink, dust (sand), and counters of silver gilt. These were, I suppose, to calculate with, as I think they still do in the Exchequer.

A gilt font with a cover, having at top a gilt cross chased with antique faces; also the hand (handle) and foot, and with roses and pomegranates (for Henry the Eighth and Catherine of Arragon; this should be at Ampthill, against Lord Gowran's christening) upon the brim, and thereon written, *Maria Regina, Veritas Temporis filia*[2].

A ship for frankincense of mother-of-pearl, the foot, garnishment, and cover of silver gilt, having the griffon holding the pillar, and Cardinal Wolsey's arms, and a little spoon of silver gilt in it. You see, Madam, by this, and the Duke of Northumberland's knives, that it was charming to be a king or queen in those days, and that all was fish that came to the crown's net. In short, I am exceedingly angry at Messrs. Hampden and Pym, that were the cause of all these pretty baubles being melted down.

One standing cup of Flanders making, garnished with

[2] This font was probably the property of Queen Mary, who used the rose and pomegranate badge of her mother, Catherine of Aragon, and the motto *Veritas temporis filia*; the last in allusion to a passage in the preamble of the Act asserting her legitimacy. (See *Annals of England*, vol. ii. p. 225.)

pearls, enamelled in divers places, containing in the foot thereof seven trenchers of silver parcel gilt standing upon the sides (I cannot make out the ichnography of this brave cup), seven forks set with three pearls apiece; at the end seven knives in a case of the like work, and one pair of snippers (snuffers), the hafts of the knives of wood, and the ends silver gilt, with a pearl at the end of each; and in the top four goblets gilt, and three cups of assay (for the taster) gilt, twelve spoons gilt, and the salts garnished with false pearls, and prettily enamelled; and a candlestick having two sockets joined together; and in the top a clock.

One bed-pan, having the Queen's arms enamelled at the end. Here was luxury, and magnificence and taste! I have a great mind to print these dear MSS., and another of Anne of Denmark's furniture at Somerset House, which was lent to me lately too. This majesty's joy was in canopies: she had more than there are chairs now in St. James's; and now and then she gave a bed to her lady of the sweet coffers. She had sweet bags enough to hold all the perfumes of Arabia, and a suit of arras with the history of Charles Brandon[3], and embroidered carpets to lay over cupboards, and fine caparisons of purple velvet, richly embroidered all over with silver, made for his Highness's horse to tilt with in Spain at the time of his being there, which his Queen Henrietta Maria, being a good housewife, ordered to be converted into a bed, as she ordered another bed to be *translated*, says the inventory, into the French fashion. Queen Anne had, besides, a cradle-mantle of crimson velvet with a broad gold lace bordered with ermines, and lined with carnation taffety; and pillows laced with gold and silver; but, alas! she had only six pair of fine Holland sheets, and thirty pair of ordinary Holland. There remained also three folio pages full of the robes of Henry VIII, and a diaper table-cloth,

[3] Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk.

whose borders were of gold needlework, and one dozen of napkins suitable; and a smock, very richly wrought with gold, silver, and silk. Pray, Madam, do you think this was her Majesty's wedding shift? I will mention nothing more, but a cabinet of ebony, inlaid with silver, *white* ebony (probably ivory) and gilt with flowers and beasts; and in the drawers a comb-case furnished, two gilt cups in the shape of turkeys (as I have three castors like owls), a dresser for the tongue (I suppose a scraper), and sundry pencils and knitting-needles: and another cabinet of cloth of silver, lined with orange-tawny velvet (probably a casket).

Well! considering this solid magnificence, must not all good Christians pray, that when his Majesty has some time or other conquered America, he will extend his arms to Peru and Mexico, that the crown may eat off gold trenchers set with pearls, and that the Queen may have smocks as rough with embroidery as hands can make them, and everything for the bed suitable? So prays her and your Ladyship's poor beadsman.

1727. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 13, 1776.

I need not tell you what a splendid *Gazette* has already told[1]. As I was here before the account arrived, and heard it but imperfectly, I could not write so soon as the first post would set out with the news. The provincials have certainly not behaved up to the haughtiness with which they rejected all overtures of peace. It is said they were outwitted, deceived by feints, and drawn into ambuscade. *That* does no honour to their generals. Great consequences are expected from this victory. I am too ignorant of war, sieges, and America,

Letter 1727.—[1] General Howe had defeated the Americans on Aug. 27, 1776, in the battle of Brooklyn or Long Island.

to pretend to judge; and really have heard so much from both sides that has not proved true, and at the same time such pains are taken to keep people in the dark, that I have laid it down to myself to believe nothing but what is universally allowed. It is your duty to credit gazettes, and you cannot err while you stick to your Bible. The red ribbon is to be sent to General Howe, who seems to have acted very sensibly.

I have received your letter of the 18th, and think you are very prudent in not accepting the proposal of ceding your estate. I have an exceedingly good opinion of your nephew, but he has been indiscreet, may be so again, and surely the tone of the age does not tempt one to trust to the sensibility of young people. How at your distance could you sue, if the annuity was in arrear? And pray how do you know that the lawyer who has suggested this scheme is an honest man? The profession is excellent at evading laws and settlements; I never heard they were so subtle at procuring redress. Do not say I gave you this advice—I have no reason to disoblige your nephew, but as *your* friend I must approve your resolution of not consenting to the project.

I never saw your Duke with the barbarous name—Ostrogothia[2]; nor am longer curious of sights. For the first summer of my life, I have stayed quietly at home; at least not been thirty miles. It has struck fifty-nine with me: which is an hour for thinking of 'the great journey,' though not for talking of it; in which there always seems a great deal of affectation or unwillingness. Nay, it is silly, too; for how few can one talk to about one's death, that care about it? if they do, it is unkind. My being is so *isolé* and insignificant, that I shall go out, like a lamp in an illumination, that cannot be missed.

If the person by whom I sent you a letter lately should

[2] Brother of the King of Sweden. *Walpole.*

return through Florence, I wish you would give him the packet that was to have come by your nephew—if not, by any safe hand—I have had none a great while. As Lady Lucy still lives, I should rather hope well from the journey, and heartily wish she may recover.

1728. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 13, 1776.

Just after I had sent away my last packet with Monsieur Hubert's letter, I heard of General Howe's success, but concluding your Ladyship would hear it from London, I did not write another letter, besides that I knew no particulars. I am not quite of Mr. Fitzpatrick's opinion that the event is of no consequence to the ministers. I believe a small check would have made them doubt a little whether they should meet the Parliament,—at least for this last month I never saw people more desponding; and this victory has certainly raised their spirits in proportion; at least it has in all I have seen, and I have not seen a soul but courtiers since the news came. Indeed I have not been out of my own house, for on Tuesday last as I came out of town my foot slipped as I got into my chaise, and I hit my knee, which brought the gout thither, and though it is almost gone, it kept me from dining at Lady Blandford's to-day, and has hindered me from scrambling into my new tower with Mr. Essex, which was a vexation; but as I am got into that very grave year, my sixtieth, it is not becoming to be moved at anything; and so, as philosophy is always the thing one has when one wants it, I pretended to be very indifferent about going into the tower, and only scolded my footman for something that would not have made me peevish at any other time, which I think proves I am a true philosopher.

If you do not understand Monsieur Hubert's letter,

Madam, how is it possible I should? You seem to have described me to him as an agreeable mixture of the continent Scipio and a member of the Hell-fire Club; nay, and to have bestowed two as uncommon ladies on me who were content without being in love with, and yet could pass a whole night in hearing very indelicate conversation. Dames more extraordinary certainly than Scipio himself! I am unfortunately of an age not to attempt to clear myself of the character of the chaste Roman, but I beg you will undeceive Monsieur Hubert about my licentious conversation, which I hope is not one of my faults. When you are in train of defending me, Madam, I beg you will also undeceive him about the shining merits he supposes in me. I hate to have anybody think better of me than I deserve; and I must say your Ladyship's partiality to me, at least your favour, is apt to rate me above the common run of men, which I know I am not.

I never had anything like a solid understanding on one side, or wit on the other. As a proof that I know my own level, you have always heard me speak with enthusiasm of Charles Townshend, George Selwyn, Charles Fox, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Gray, Mr. Gibbon, and of everybody of singular capacity or parts, which is seldom the case but of those who are conscious of having no pretensions; but this is growing too grave apropos to Mr. Hubert's wild letter. If I had wit, I should have laughed at it with some wit.

I am exceedingly inclined to come to Ampthill about the 24th. I have no exceptions to the party before as individuals, but as too numerous; besides I promised to go again to Park Place, and if I can walk tolerably by that time, think of going thither about the 18th or 19th for a couple of days, but I will neither embarrass them nor you with my gout, and will be sure it is gone before I frisk anywhere.

Oct. 15.

I received your postscript, and add one to mine. About the American news, I say what I always have thought and said, that whatever way this war ends, it will be fatal to this country. The liberty of America made it flourish to the prodigious height it did. If governed by an army, instead of inviting settlers and trade, it will be deserted and be a burthen to us, as Peru and Mexico, with all their mines, have been to Spain. The war has already drained us of men; if the army could be brought back, how many, between climate and other chances, will return? Our ships are entering on their third winter in those seas, and we have flung away in those three years what should have lessened our debt, and prepared against a war with France. The plea for the last Peace was our inability of proceeding with the war. Are we in the condition we were in 1763? How soon we shall have a French war, I know not; it is much talked of already at Paris; but come when it will, then will be the moment of judging of this war with the colonies. I believe France will then recover Canada, with interest; and for the East Indies, with our fleets, supported by our trade, obtained, I have always looked on them as a vision, which made us drunk with riches, which will be a burthen to maintain, and which will vanish like a scene in the Arabian Tales. I have not less gloomy ideas of your Ireland, where, I conclude, the first storm will burst. I could carry my prophecy much further; but the present exultation speaks it all—nor does it surprise me. It is natural, I doubt, for the human heart to pass from despondency to intoxication; nor can one wonder. I believe it is the truest philosophy to think only of the present moment. Chance is a more potent sovereign than foresight, which has no ways and means but probability to work

with. I honour Chance, and beg her to contradict all my prophecies.

I heard the story of the Prince of Conti[1] here, never from France: indeed, I heard two stories, one of the late Prince, another of the present, and know not which your Ladyship means. Neither sounded to me in the least probable. I still less know who the lady is, that is only indulged in feeding her horse with cherries—a luxury she cannot enjoy above one month in the twelve. As this is October, when I hear it, it puts me in mind of the late Duke of Cleveland, who though past twenty when his father was dying in December, was overjoyed, and said, 'Now my mother must stay in my father's room, she cannot watch *me*, and I will go into the garden and get birds'-nests.'

Mr. Conway has certainly marks of his disorder still, though not considerable. I hope to find him still more mended than he was.

1729. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Thursday, 31.

Thank you for your letter. I send this by the coach. You will have found a new scene[1]—not an unexpected one by you and me, though I do not pretend I thought it so near. I rather imagined France would have instigated or winked at Spain's beginning with us. Here is a solution of the Americans declaring themselves independent[2]. Oh! the folly, the madness, the guilt of having plunged us into this abyss! Were we and a few more endued with any uncommon penetration?—No: they who did not see as far

Letter 1728.—[1] Louis François Joseph de Bourbon, known during the lifetime of his father (whom he had recently succeeded) as the Comte de la Marche.

Letter 1729.—[1] On the opening of the Parliament in the year 1776. *Walpole.*

[2] Probably an allusion to the willingness of France to help the Americans.

would not. I am impatient to hear the complexion of to-day. I suppose it will, on the part of administration, have been a wretched farce of fear, daubed over with airs of bullying. You, I do not doubt, have acted like yourself, feeling for our situation, above insulting, and unprovoked but at the criminality that has brought us to this pass. Pursue your own path, nor lean to the court that may be paid to you on either side, as I am sure you will not regard their being displeased that you do not go as far as their interested views may wish.

If the court should receive any more of what they call good news, I think the war with France will be unavoidable. It was the victory at Long Island, and the frantic presumption it occasioned, that has ripened France's measures; and now we are to awe them by pressing; an act that speaks our impotence!—which France did not want to learn!

I would have come to town, but I had declared so much I would not, that I thought it would look as if I came to enjoy the distress of the ministers; but I do not enjoy the distress of my country. I think we are undone—I have always thought so; whether we enslaved America, or lost it totally: so we that were against the war could expect no good issue. If you do return to Park Place to-morrow, you will oblige me much by breakfasting here: you know it wastes you very little time.

I am glad I did not know of Mrs. Damer's sore throat till it is almost well. Pray take care and do not catch it.

Thank you for your care of me: I will not stay a great deal here, but at present I never was better in my life; and here I have no vexatious moments. I hate to dispute; I scorn to triumph myself, and it is very difficult to keep my temper when others do. I own I have another reason

for my retirement, which is prudence. I have thought of it late, but, at least, I will not run into any new expense. It would cost me more than I care to afford to buy a house in town, unless I do it to take some of my money out of the stocks, for which I tremble a little. My brother is seventy; and if I live myself, I must not build too much on his life; and you know, if he fails, I lose the most secure part of my income. I refused from Lord Holland, and last year from Lord North, to accept the place for my own life; and having never done a dirty thing, I will not disgrace myself at fifty-nine. I should like to live as well as I have done; but what I wish more, is to secure what I have already saved for those I would take care of after me. These are the true reasons of my dropping all thought of a better house in town, and of living so privately here. I will not sacrifice my health to my prudence; but my temper is so violent, that I know the tranquillity I enjoy here in solitude is of much more benefit to my health, than the air of the country is detrimental to it. You see I can be reasonable when I have time to reflect; but philosophy has a poor chance with me when my warmth is stirred; and yet I know that an angry old man out of Parliament, and that can do nothing but be angry, is a ridiculous animal.

1730. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 1, 1776.

For three weeks you have been expecting accounts from New York: so have we; and so we are still. Nothing was come this morning; but we seem to be at the eve of another interlude, that will be full as serious as the chief piece. Very few days before the Parliament was to meet, nine or ten ships of the line were put into commission; and, on Tuesday, press-warrants were issued, and every

appearance spoke war. The first reports were that Spain was going to attack Portugal; and so it looks still: and, they say, by the obstinacy of the latter.

I do not know how, but the general opinion is, that, though Monsieur de Noailles[1] is just arrived, our preparations are made at least as much against France, as to support Portugal. Every port in France countenances these apprehensions; and our late success at Long Island does but make it probable that we shall not be suffered quietly to fetch over too many victories. The agent[2] of the colonies is openly countenanced at Versailles; and it is past a doubt that they are assisted and traded with. I hear this was urged yesterday, in both Houses, by the opposition; and not denied. The King's Speech you will see; and I think it gainsays but very faintly all I tell you. The opposition made a sort of protest against all the late measures, in a kind of address, that they would have substituted for that prepared by the court: not expecting, to be sure, to carry it, but as their declaration. As I am here, I could not learn even these particulars in time to write to you by to-night's post. Indeed, what shall pass at present in Parliament will decide nothing. Parliament has done what, I think, it will never be able to undo; and it must excuse me if I do not honour its wisdom.

What a strange event in France! Monsieur Necker[3], a Protestant, and actually resident from Geneva, made one of the Comptrollers of the Finances! What says your neighbour, Madame of Babylon[4]? but, poor old soul, she dares say nothing. Marshal Turenne's ghost will die for shame, that, with all his glory, he turned Catholic to make his court. A little Swiss banker will be above such mean-

LETTER 1730.—[1] The new Ambassador from France. *Walpole.*
[2] Silas Deane.
[3] Jacques Necker (1732–1804).
[4] Rome. *Walpole.*

ness. No, I never disapproved your decrowning Count Albany[5]: it became you: but I certainly have the utmost contempt for the court of Rome, that denied him a title, of which his family had forfeited all the advantages for *their* cause. I am glad they did; for it shows how insignificant both he and they are. You never did mention the *démêlé*[6] with Lord Cowper; and I could easily excuse it.

There seems to me little danger in Lady O.'s eruption. She has for many years had frequent red faces, and therefore I suppose they do her good.

I still think Lady Lucy[7] has a good chance of living, by holding out so long. Thank you much for your kindness to Mr. Giles[8]. I shall go to town on Sunday for a day or two, and if I hear any further news you shall know.

Arlington Street, Nov. 4.

At last the confirmation is come of New York being in possession of General Howe[9], having been abandoned by the provincials. Three thousand men sallied out of their lines, but were repulsed by three regiments, with little loss of life on either side, but thirteen or fourteen of the King's officers were wounded. Three days after Howe was in the town it was fired by some provincials, and a quarter of it burnt before the flames could be extinguished. Howe is now encamped within four miles of the enemy's lines. I don't know whether he means to attempt to force them, or whether they mean to make their stand now, or draw him up into the country. My opinion is, that if he gains any

[5] The Pretender. Sir Horace Mann had remonstrated against his being received at Rome as King of England; and the Pope complied. *Walpole.*

[6] The Count of Albany and Lord Cowper quarrelled and went to law over a house which each of them wished to take.

[7] Lady Lucy Mann.

[8] A neighbour of Mr. Walpole at Twickenham, by whom he had written to Sir Horace. *Walpole.*

[9] General Howe took possession of New York on Sept. 15, 1776.

great advantage, it will but the sooner bring on a war with France, as it is natural to suppose they will not let us ever be quiet masters of America again, nor miss the present favourable opportunity of embarrassing us so considerably. However, I have no great faith in reasonings on future events, and much less on my own reasonings of that sort. When it is so difficult to trace back events to causes, the reverse must be much more fallible.

1731. To the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 2, 1776.

Though inclination, and consciousness that a man of my age, who is neither in Parliament nor in business, has little to do in the world, keep me a good deal out of it, yet I will not, my dear Lord, encourage you in retirement; to which, for the interest of your friends, you have but too much propensity. The manners of the age cannot be agreeable to those who have lived in something soberer times; nor do I think, except in France, where old people are never out of fashion, that it is reasonable to tire those whose youth and spirits may excuse some dissipation. Above all things, it is my resolution never to profess retirement, lest, when I have lost all my real teeth, the imaginary one, called a colt's, should hurry me back and make me ridiculous. But one never outlives all one's cotemporaries; one may assort with them. Few Englishmen, too, I have observed, can bear solitude without being hurt by it. Our climate makes us capricious, and we must rub off our roughness and humours against one another. We have, too, an always increasing resource, which is, that though we go not to the young, they must come to us: younger usurpers tread on their heels, as they did on ours, and revenge us that have

been deposed. They may retain their titles, like Queen Christina, Sir M —— N ——, and Lord Rivers; but they find they have no subjects. If we could but live long enough, we should hear Lord Carlisle, Mr. Storer, &c., complain of the airs and abominable hours of the youth of the age. You see, my dear Lord, my easy philosophy can divert itself with anything, even with visions; which perhaps is the best way of treating the great vision itself, life. For half one's time one should laugh *with* the world, the other half *at* it—and then it is hard if we want amusement.

I am heartily glad, for your Lordship's and Lady Anne Conolly's sakes, that General Howe[1] is safe. I sincerely interest myself for everybody you are concerned for. I will say no more on a subject on which I fear I am so unlucky as to differ very much with your Lordship, having always fundamentally disapproved our conduct with America. Indeed, the present prospect of war with France, when we have so much disabled ourselves, and are exposed in so many quarters, is a topic for general lamentation, rather than for canvassing of opinions, which every man must form for himself: and I doubt the moment is advancing when we shall be forced to think alike, at least on the present.

I have not yet above a night at a time in town—but shall be glad to give your Lordship and Lady Strafford a meeting there whenever you please.

Your faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER 1731.—[1] General Howe's wife was a daughter of Lady Anne Conolly, and a niece of Lord Strafford.

1732. To the Rev. William Mason.

LETTRE DE VOLTAIRE À M. D'ARGENTAL[1].

Mon cher Ami, Fernet, 19 Juillet, 1776.

J'apprends que Monsieur de St. Julien arrive dans mon désert avec le Kain. Si la chose est vraie, j'en suis tout étonné et tout joyeux ; mais il faut que je vous dise combien je suis fâché pour l'honneur du tripot contre un nommé Tourneur[2], qu'on dit Secrétaire de la Librairie, et qui ne me paroit pas le Secrétaire du bon goût. Auriez-vous lu deux volumes misérables dans lesquels il veut faire regarder Shakespeare comme le seul modèle de la véritable tragédie ? Il l'appelle le Dieu du Théâtre ; il sacrifie tous les François sans exception à son idole, comme on sacrifioit des cochons à Cérès. Il ne daigne pas nommer Corneille ou Racine : ces deux grands hommes sont seulement enveloppés dans la proscription générale sans que leurs noms soient prononcés. Il y a déjà deux tomes d'imprimés de ce Shakespeare, qu'on prendrait pour des pièces de la foire, faites il y a deux cents ans ; ce maraud a trouvé le secret de faire engager le Roi et la Reine et toute la famille royale à souscrire à son ouvrage. Avez-vous lu son abominable grimoire dont il y aura encore cinq volumes ? Avez-vous une haine assez vigoureuse contre cet impudent imbécile ? Souffrirez-vous l'affront qu'il fait à la France ? Vous et Monsieur de Thibouville[3] vous êtes trop doux. Il n'y a pas en France assez

Letter 1732.—Hitherto printed as part of letter to Mason of Sept. 17, 1776. (See *Notes and Queries*, Aug. 4, 1900.)

[1] Charles Augustin de Ferriol (1700–1788), Comte d'Argental, Minister of Parma at the court of France, and Councillor in the Parliament of Paris. He was an intimate friend of Voltaire, and a younger brother of Madame du Deffand's friend, Pont-de-Veyle. A copy of this letter was enclosed by Madame du Deffand in her letter to Horace Walpole of Aug. 4, 1776.

[2] Pierre le Tourneur (1736–1788), translator of many English works into French.

[3] Henri Lambert d'Erbigny (d. 1784), Marquis de Thibouville, soldier and *littérateur*. He was on friendly terms with Voltaire.

de camouflets, assez de bonnets d'ânes, assez de pillorie contre un pareil faquin? Le sang pétille dans mes vieilles veines en parlant de lui. S'il ne vous a pas mis en colère, je vous tiens pour un homme impassible. Ce qu'il y a d'affreux c'est que le monstre a un parti en France, et pour comble de calamités, et d'horreur, c'est moi qui autrefois parlai le premier de ce Shakespeare; c'est moi qui le premier montrai aux François quelques perles que j'avois trouvées dans son énorme fumier. Je ne m'attendais pas que je servirois à fouler aux pieds les couronnes de Racine et de Corneille, pour en orner le front d'un histrion barbare.

Tâchez, je vous prie, d'être aussi en colère que moi, sans quoi je me sens capable de faire un mauvais coup. Quant à mon ami M. le cocher Gilbert[4], je souhaite qu'il aille au carcan à bride abattue, etc., etc.

I have a mind to provoke you, and so I send you this silly torrent of ribaldry. May the spirit of Pope that dictated your Musæus, animate you to punish this worst of dunces, a genius turned fool with envy! I have a mind to be a dunce too and alter one line of your epitaph, the last. I think *She heard* should not be repeated twice; *heard* is an inharmonious word, and the elision between *she* and *heard* adds to the cacophony. I would read,—

> She heard thy Homer in her Milton's strains,
> *And* Pindar's music from the lyre of Gray.—

Or 'thy.' It is very impertinent in me, who have no ear and am no poet, to correct you, who are a musician, and a poet if ever there was one; but then, I will submit if you do not approve my emendation.

[4] Probably Nicolas Joseph Laurent Gilbert (1751–1780), poet.

Having nothing new to read, I have been tumbling over my old books, and there I found what I had never read nor heard mentioned, and which I think has a vast deal more of wit than the ancients used in their writings. Mind, I say used, for no doubt all times and all countries have produced men of wit, and I know Julius Cæsar had a collection of Cicero's *bons mots*. Diogenes Laertius too has recorded those of the philosophers, very few of which I allow to have any wit in them. The piece I mean is Seneca's *De Morte Claudii Caesaris*. There is a good deal of Greek in it, and I have forgotten my Greek, and some of my Latin too, and do not understand many passages in this satire; but let me give you an instance of great wit; speaking of his death and the astrologers, who had not foretold it rightly, he says, *horam ejus nemo novit, nemo enim illum unquam natum putavit.*

Last night I took up Pope's Letters to Mr. Digby[5], and finding Lady Suffolk's name, I regretted having never questioned her about the latter. This is a sort of pleasure I lose every day. I came into the world long enough ago to have informed myself from elder persons of many things I should now like to know; and there is much more satisfaction in inquiring into old stories than in telling them. Formerly I was so foolish, like most young people, as to despise them. I don't mean by this to invite the young to apply to me; I am not over-fond of their company. Recollection is more agreeable than observation at the end of life. Will Dr. Johnson, and I know not most of the rest by name, interest the next age like Addison, Prior, Pope, and Congreve? will General Gage or Sir Peter Parker succeed to the renown of the Duke of Marlborough, even

[5] Hon. Robert Digby (d. 1726), second son of fifth Baron Digby. Pope wrote his epitaph and that of his sister in the lines beginning, 'Go, fair example of untainted youth.'

had the last had no more merit than Macpherson will allow him? Oh, there is another of our authors, Macpherson! when one's pen can sink to him, it is time to seal one's letter.

1733. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, Nov. 13, 1776.

As next to sense and wit, I love nonsense; and as it is very convenient to love the last, especially if it will produce the second, I shall certainly indulge myself, since my quotation from a certain potion (which I do not think the most rational performance in the world) from a certain book gave occasion to your Ladyship to make an application of as much wit as ever I heard in my life; and yet so obvious an one that it is amazing it never struck anybody before. My Lord J. may comfort himself, for though he is very blind, you have discovered that if he had five more eyes, and all seven were as good as Argus's, they might prove no preservative. I sent you, on Monday, another piece of nonsense, and expect great returns from it, though you never can exceed your last quotation. You guessed very right too about Strawberry.

I have called this morning on Lady Warwick, but they are gone out of town again. News I found none, but that Mr. North[1] is to marry Miss Egerton, with 100,000*l.* to begin the world with.

Yesterday, just after I arrived, I heard drums and trumpets in Piccadilly: I looked out of the window and saw a procession with streamers flying. At first I thought it a pressgang, but seeing the corps so well drest, like Hussars, in yellow with blue waistcoats and breeches, and high caps, I concluded it was some new body of our allies,

Letter 1733.—[1] No son of Lord North married a Miss Egerton.

or a regiment newly raised, and with new regimentals for distinction. I was not totally mistaken, for the colonel is *a new ally*. In short, this was a procession set forth by Mr. Bate[2], Lord Lyttelton's chaplain, and author of the old *Morning Post*, and meant as an appeal to the town against his antagonist, the new one. I did not perceive it, but the musicians had masks; on their caps was written *The Morning Post*, and they distributed hand-bills. I am sure there were at least between thirty and forty, and this mummery must have cost a great deal of money. Are not we quite distracted, reprobate, absurd, beyond all people that ever lived? The new *Morning Post* I am told, for I never take in either, exceeds all the outrageous Billingsgate that ever was heard of. What a country! Does it signify what happens to it? Is there any sense, integrity, decency, taste, left? Are not we the most despicable nation upon earth, in every light? A solemn and expensive masquerade exhibited by a clergyman, in defence of daily scandal against women of the first rank, in the midst of a civil war! and while the labouring poor are torn from their families by pressgangs! and a foreign war is hanging over our heads! And everybody was diverted with this! —Do you think, Madam, that anything can save such a sottish and stupid nation? Does it deserve to be saved? you that have children will wish for miracles; as I have none but what Mary provides, I can almost wish we may be scourged. I pity the unborn, who were in the entail of happiness, but what can be said for those in present possession?

P.S. I return to-morrow to Strawberry.

[2] Rev. Henry Bate (1745–1824), editor of the *Morning Post*. He took the name of Dudley in 1784, and was created a Baronet in 1813.

1734. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 24, 1776.

Mr. Giles has delivered me the packet of letters, for which I thank you; but I have been so backwards and forwards between this place and London, that I have missed seeing him himself. I am rejoiced to hear there are hopes of Lady Lucy.

I cannot tell you the particulars, as I am here, and have not yet learnt them; but there is another victory[1], a naval one, over the provincials on the Lake Champlain. They have lost their whole fleet, have burnt Crown Point, and are retired to Ticonderoga, where, I think, they are besieged. You will see the particular circumstances in the papers, as soon as I could hear and tell them. General Howe, it is said, finding the lines at King's Bridge too strong, is drawing others between them and New York. Some say he is meditating or executing a diversion; at the same time there is a pretty general opinion that he is negotiating a peace.

You, perhaps, are still more inquisitive about the appearance of war in Europe. If I was an ambassador myself, I could not answer you more unsatisfactorily, which, if I spoke in a character, would be called mysteriously or enigmatically; but my reason is founded, as perhaps it is sometimes in your profession, on ignorance. The outward and visible signs are all martial. Equipment of a fleet, pressing of sailors, and the nomination of an admiral: so much for Bellona. On the other hand, France says she has no thoughts of war, and our ministers declare they believe her. For her amusement, indeed, she makes great naval

Letter 1734.—[1] On Oct. 11 and 13, 1776.

preparations, and some say, does not frown on the Americans, nor on their Resident, Silas Deane. *Nous verrons.*

If you should ask what the opposition says,—I answer, nothing. They have abandoned Parliament, and some are gone into the country, and some to Paris: not to confer with Mr. Deane, but to see horse-races,—of which we have none here!

After so much negative information, I can tell you one event: Lord Buckingham[2] is made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Being a little unfortunate generally in my prophecies and conjectures, I choose to foretell that he will be the most humble, sweet-tempered, generous, and profound governor that ever that island was blessed with yet.

I forgot to say, that it is not Lord Bristol who commands the fleet, but Admiral Keppel. He is in the opposition, but they being at leisure, he was appointed.

I certainly did mean to name Lord Thomas Clinton to you, as I was desired, though I knew it was unnecessary. Thank you much for saying I did; I don't know how I came to forget it.

Arlington Street, Nov. 26.

You will see the particulars of the naval victory in the *Gazette.* It is not much valued here, as it is thought Carleton must return to Quebec for the winter. The idea of negotiation gains ground—that of war declines, for we hear Grimaldi, the Spanish minister, has resigned, and he was reckoned no friend of ours; but pray, never mind what I say in the future tense, in which I have no skill at all. We know past times very imperfectly, and how should we, when few know even the present, and they who do, have good reasons for not being communicative? I have lived till I think I know nothing at all.

[2] Hitherto printed 'Rockingham.'

1735. To Sir Horace Mann.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 1, 1776.

Though I wrote to you but the other day, and have nothing new to tell you, I must say a few words in answer to yours by Mr. Hull, and to that of Nov. 16th which I have just received.

As you are my first consideration, I could but state to you what reason and experience dictated for your personal security. I have, however, no doubt but you will find all honour and justice in your nephew, who I am sure has sense, and as I told you before you saw him, appeared to me to have an excellent heart. It pleased me to see that he answered so thoroughly in your eyes to the character I had given you of him. As he is Gal's son, I must be glad too that you have made his mind at ease about his daughters. Still as I have so much friendship for your whole family, and think so well of Mr. and Mrs. Foote, I am not at all sorry that the step you have taken was transacted without my advice. I could never have brought myself to have decided on a point in which one part or other of your family would think itself wounded, as I doubt may be the case now; though I believe Mr. and Mrs. Foote are too good and reasonable to do more than think. You yourself have been originally ill-used by both your brothers James and Edward. The former was very weak—the other had not very good sense, with an abominable temper—but he is gone and I will say no more.

I did tell you I received the packet from Mr. Gyles, who, I suppose, is the person you mean by Mr. *Price*; you might easily forget the name of a man you knew so little.

I don't know who the Englishwoman is of whom you give so ridiculous a description; but it will suit thousands. I distrust my age continually, and impute to it half the

contempt I feel for my countrymen and women. If I think the other half well founded, it is by considering what must be said hereafter of the present age. What is to impress a great idea of us on posterity? In truth, what do our cotemporaries of all other countries think of us? They stare at and condemn our politics and follies; and if they retain any respect for us, I doubt it is for the sense we have had. I do know, indeed, one man who still worships us, but his adoration is testified so very absurdly, as not to do us much credit. It is a Monsieur de Marchais, first *valet de chambre* to the King of France. He has the *Anglomanie* so strong, that he has not only read more English than French books, but if any valuable work appears in his own language, he waits to peruse it till it is translated into English; and to be sure our translations of French are admirable things!

To do the rest of the French justice, I mean such as like us, they adopt only our egregious follies, and in particular the flower of them, horse-racing! *Le Roi Pepin*, a racer, is the horse in fashion. I suppose the next shameful practice of ours they naturalize will be personal scurrilities in the newspapers, especially on young and handsome women, in which we certainly are originals! Voltaire, who first brought us into fashion in France, is stark mad at his own success. Out of envy to writers of his own nation, he cried up Shakespeare; and now is distracted at the just encomiums bestowed on that first genius of the world in the new translation[1]. He sent to the French Academy an invective that bears all the marks of passionate dotage. Mrs. Montagu[2] happened to be present when it was read. Suard[3], one of their writers, said to her, 'Je crois, Madame, que vous êtes un peu fâchée de ce que vous venez d'en-

LETTER 1735. — [1] Le Tourneur's translations into French.

[2] Mrs. Robinson Montagu, who wrote the Defence of Shakespeare against Voltaire. *Walpole.*

[3] Jean Baptiste Antoine Suard (1733–1817), member of the French Academy.

tendre.' She replied, 'Moi, Monsieur! point du tout! Je ne suis pas amie de Monsieur Voltaire.' I shall go to town the day after to-morrow, and will add a postscript if I hear any news.

Dec. 3rd.

I am come late, have seen nobody, and must send away my letter.

1736. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, Dec. 3, 1776.

I should not have waited for a regular response, Madam, if I had not been precisely in the same predicament with your Ladyship, reduced to write from old books to tell you anything new. I have been three days at Strawberry, and have not seen a creature but Sir John Hawkins's five volumes[1], the two last of which, thumping as they are, I literally did read in two days. They are old books to all intents and purposes, very old books; and what is new, is like old books, too, that is, full of minute facts that delight antiquaries: nay, if there had never been such things as parts and taste, this work would please everybody. The first volume is extremely worth looking *at*, for the curious facsimiles of old music and old instruments, and so is the second. The third is very heavy; the two last will amuse you, I think, exceedingly, at least they do me.

My friend, Sir John, is a matter-of-fact man, and does now and then stoop very low in quest of game. Then he is so exceedingly religious and grave as to abhor mirth, except it is printed in the old black letter, and then he calls the most vulgar ballad pleasant and full of humour. He thinks nothing can be sublime but an anthem, and Handel's choruses heaven upon earth. However he writes with great modera-

Letter 1736.—[1] Hawkins' *History of Music.*

tion, temper, and good sense, and the book is a very valuable one. I have begged his austerity to relax in one point, for he ranks comedy with farce and pantomime. Now I hold a perfect comedy to be the perfection of human composition, and believe firmly that fifty *Iliads* and *Æneids* could be written sooner than such a character as Falstaff's. Sir John says that Dr. Wallis discovered that they who are not charmed with music want a nerve in their brain. This would be dangerous anatomy. I should swear Sir John wants the comic nerve; and by parity of reason, we should ascribe new nerves to all those who have bad taste, or are delighted with what others think ridiculous. We should have nerves like Romish saints to preside over every folly; and Mr. Cosmo must have a nerve which I hope Dr. Wallis would not find in 50,000 dissections. Rechin, too, had a sort of nerve that is lost like the music of the ancients; yet, perhaps, the royal *touch* could revive it more easily than it cures the evil.

4th.

The quarrel between the SS. Cosmo and Damian[2], they say, is at an end. I kept back my letter in hopes of something to tell your Ladyship, but there is a universal yawn, and the town as empty as in August. I heard only a good story of Mrs. Boscawen[3], the Admiral's widow, who lives near London, and came to town as soon as she had dined at her country hour. She said, 'I expected to find everybody at dinner, but instead of that, I found all the young ladies strolling about the streets, and not thinking of going home to dress for dinner; so I had set out in the evening, and yet got to town in the morning of the same day.'

[2] Patron saints of the medical profession; probably an allusion to the constant disputes between the brothers—William Hunter the anatomist and John Hunter the surgeon.

[3] Frances (d. 1805), daughter of William Evelyn Glanville, of St. Clair, Kent; m. (1744) Hon. Edward (afterwards Admiral) Boscawen.

I shall stay here for Mr. Mason's *Caractacus* that is to be acted on Friday, and then return to my hill.

1737. To George Allan [1].

Sir, Strawberry Hill, Dec. 9, 1776.

As I have not the satisfaction of being acquainted with you, I must think myself very particularly obliged by your present of the two fine and very like prints of Bishop Trevor [2], and beg you will be pleased to accept my sincere thanks. If you ever happen to pass this way I shall be extremely glad to show you the collection you have so handsomely adorned, and to have an opportunity in person of assuring you how gratefully I am, Sir,

Your most obliged
and obedient humble servant,
Hor. Walpole.

1738. To the Rev. William Cole.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 9, 1776.

I know you love an episcopal print [1], and, therefore, I send you one of two, that have just been given to me. As you have time and patience, too, I recommend you to peruse Sir John Hawkins's new *History of Music*. It is true, there are five huge volumes in quarto, and perhaps you may not care for the expense, but surely you can borrow them in the University, and, though you may, no more than I, delight in the scientific part, there is so much about cathedral service, and choirs, and other old matters, that I am sure you

Letter 1737.—Not in C.; reprinted from Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. viii. p. 509.

[1] George Allan (1736-1800), topographer and antiquary. He was by profession an attorney.

[2] A former Bishop of Durham.

Letter 1738.—[1] See the previous letter.

will be amused with a great deal, particularly the two last volumes, and the facsimiles of old music in the first. I doubt it is a work that will not sell rapidly, but it must have a place in all great libraries.

Pray tell Mr. Essex his ceiling is finished, and very well executed.

As we have not had about[2] two or three cold days, I hope the winter agrees with you, and that your complaints are gone off.

Adieu, dear Sir. Yours most sincerely,

H. W.

1739. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, Dec. 17, 1776.

It is not from being made Archbishop of York[1] that I write by a secretary, Madam; but because my right hand has lost its cunning. It has had the gout ever since Friday night, and I am overjoyed with it, for there is no appearance of its going any farther. I came to town on Sunday in a panic, concluding I should be bedrid for three months, but I went out last night, and think I shall be able in a few days to play upon the guitar if I could play upon it at all.

I know very little, but that for want of Parliament General Burgoyne is at this moment making an oration from the rostrum to the citizens of Westminster, in recommendation of Lord Petersham[2]; and that Doctor Franklin, at seventy-two, is arrived[3] in a frigate at Nantes, and has brought in two prizes that he took in his way. He was to be at Paris on Saturday night. He left everything quiet in America on the 30th of October, and I have been just told that letters

[2] So in original; read 'above.'

Letter 1739.—[1] Markham, Bishop of Chester, was appointed Archbishop of York on Dec. 16, 1776.

[2] Charles Stanhope (1753–1829), Viscount Petersham; eldest son of second Earl of Harrington, whom he succeeded in 1779.

[3] As Envoy to the court of France.

are come from Lord Howe of the 13th of November, in which he asks for some more cables, and says he has written by another ship that is not arrived.

I have seen the picture of St. George, and approve the Duke of Bedford's head, and the exact likeness of Miss Vernon, but the attitude is mean and foolish, and expresses silly wonderment. But of all delicious is a picture of a little girl[4] of the Duke of Buccleuch, who is overlaid with a long cloak, bonnet, and muff, in the midst of the snow, and is perishing blue and red with cold, but looks so smiling, and so good-humoured, that one longs to catch her up in one's arms and kiss her till she is in a sweat and squalls.

My hand has not a word more to say.

1740. To Sir Horace Mann.

Arlington Street, Dec. 20, 1776.

I CANNOT write to you myself, my dear Sir, for I have the gout in my right hand and wrist, and feel enough of it about me to fear that it will make its general tour; which by this third year's experience, seems to have grown annual instead of biennial: however, I am still so partial to the bootikins, as to believe that it is they that save me from having near so much pain as other gouty people complain of; and, while I do not suffer much, there is no great hardship in an old man's being confined to his own house. It is not, however, to talk of myself that I send you this; but to tell you that I have received your letter for Lord North, and as I could not carry it myself, I sent it to him by a friend, and do not doubt but so just a request will be attended to.

[4] Lady Caroline Scott, afterwards Marchioness of Queensberry. She entered the room, dressed as Horace Walpole describes her, while Sir Joshua Reynolds was engaged on a portrait of her mother and another child. Sir Joshua was so much struck by her costume that he insisted on painting her portrait in it.

It looks very much as if we should know soon whether America is to be subdued or saved by a French war. We heard on Tuesday last that Dr. Franklin himself was landed in France—no equivocal step; and on Wednesday came a full explanation. General Howe had made two movements, that threatened enclosing Washington, and cutting him off from his magazines: a small engagement ensued, in which the Americans were driven from a post without much loss on either side. Washington has since retired with his whole army to other heights, about five miles off, seeming to intend to protract the war, as was always thought would be their wisest way; but, as the Americans do not behave very heroically, and as the King's fleet will now be masters of the coast, it is supposed that Washington must retire northward, and that the Howes will make great progress in the south, if not prevented by the rigour of the season. As nearly as I can make out, Dr. Franklin must have sailed a day or two after Washington's retreat; and therefore it is natural to conclude that he is come to tell France that she must directly interpose and protect the Americans, or that the Americans must submit to such terms as they can obtain. If I am not wrong in my reasons, the question is thus brought to a short issue, and there I leave it. I am never fond of speculations, and not at all so when I am not quite well. Adieu!

1741. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Arlington Street, Dec. 23, 1776.

I know, Madam, I ought to have thanked your Ladyship immediately for your very friendly letter, but I have been too much out of order even to dictate. Though just now I am out of pain, I am so unwell that I conclude there is a mass of gout moulding itself for the rest of my limbs,

though hitherto it has kept closely to my right arm. I did most assuredly intend to be at Ampthill this Christmas, and my project was to have asked you last Tuesday when it should be. I heartily repent that I did not make my visit when I was able: I ought to have remembered that I must take time by the forelock, especially considering how few hairs are left in that lock for me.

The party you are so good as to propose to me, Madam, would be very agreeable indeed, if it could do anything but tantalize me; and I am sad company for the young or healthful. I must not think of going anywhither but with Wolsey's speech in my mouth, 'Father Abbot, I am come to lay my weary bones amongst you!' I am sure I have nothing else to carry!

So, the Howes did not think their prodigious victory worth writing a line about! They little know that if they did but send us a bantam egg we can hatch an ostrich from it. I do not know what ardour anybody may have to confer with Dr. Franklin, but I do not believe the Doctor will condescend to be at home to an Englishman. They say Lord S.[1] took infinite pains for an interview with Silas Dean; and when he did at last bring it about, he might as well have obtained a personal audience from the Grand Signior without an interpreter.

As I have no resource but in quartos in the few moments when I can do anything, I am reading the *Life of Philip II*, by a professor of St. Andrews[2]. I sent for it to see how a Scotchman would celebrate the barbarities of Philip, Cardinal Granville, and the Duke of Alva, in the United Provinces; but to my utter astonishment the man does not, as most biographers do, when they write the life of

Letter 1741.—[1] Lord Stormont, Ambassador at Paris.
[2] Robert Watson, LL.D., appointed Principal of St. Salvator's College in 1777; d. 1781.

a Charles I, or a Richard III, fall in love with his hero. On the contrary, he is so just and explicit, that I believe even Dr. Franklin would admit him to kiss his hand. But I have read only the first volume: the author may come about: the second tome of many a man is a contradiction to his first. Adieu, Madam, I wish I could distribute all the happiness I miss upon your Christmas.

1742. To the Comtesse de Viry.

[1776.]

Lady Weymouth[1] m'a dit, Madame, que vous me reprochiez de ne vous avoir pas envoyé la Vie de Mr. Gray[2] comme je vous l'avais promis. J'avoue à ma honte que vous avez raison, et que vous me rendriez justice si vous me grondiez sans pitié. Cependant comme il n'y a si mauvaise cause qui puisse se défendre, il me semble que si j'avois un peu d'éloquence, je désarmerois non seulement votre colère, mais je craindrois de vous voir comme Niobé, convertie en pierre à force de pleurer. En un mot, la goutte m'a mis à la torture depuis quatre mois; or, je ne sais comment cela se fait, mais les douleurs excessives ne me rappellent jamais rien d'agréable. Comment s'attendre donc que les angoisses, l'apothicaire Graham, les flanelles, et une chaise longue pussent rappeler à ma mémoire l'esprit, la vivacité, la bonne humeur et la gaieté? Bien loin de cela, Madame, je vous proteste que quand Lady Weymouth prononça votre nom, je me réveillai comme sortant d'un rêve. Il m'est arrivé comme

Letter 1742. — Not in C.; now first printed from MS. copy, annotated by Walpole, in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis. The letter is unknown except in the translation, which was made (probably for Madame du Deffand's benefit) by the Rev. Louis Dutens, author of *Souvenirs d'un Voyageur qui se repose.*

[1] Lady Weymouth was a daughter of the Duke of Portland, and Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Charlotte. *Walpole.*

[2] *The Life of Mr. Gray*, by Mr. Mason. Miss Speed was one of the heroines of Mr. Gray's *Long Story.* *Walpole.*

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au sultan des Mille et Une Nuits, qui ayant plongé sa tête dans une cuve d'eau, s'imagine avoir passé vingt ans dans la pauvreté et dans la misère, et quand il sortit sa tête hors de l'eau, se trouva au milieu de sa cour, et aussi sultan que jamais. Je me ressouviens à présent qu'au mois d'Août et de Septembre dernier, j'ai vu Madame de Viry[3] fêter toute la France, répandant la gaieté au milieu des cérémonies, mettant la foule à son aise, et paraissant elle-même aussi gaie, aussi amusante et amusée que si (au lieu d'avoir imaginé des projets de pompe et de plaisirs pour tout Versailles et Paris) il y avoit eu des légions de fées et de grâces occupées à l'amuser[4]. Vous voyez, Madame, par la vérité de ce portrait que j'ai certainement recouvré mes sens et ma mémoire, qu'il falloit que j'eusse perdus quand je vous oubliai. À l'avenir je craindrois plus que jamais la goutte, n'ayant pas su jusqu'à présent qu'elle attaquoit ma tête.

Lady Temple[5], Lord and Lady Edgcumbe et Lord Nuneham qui m'ont consolé dans mon béquillage[6], et en ont été témoins, m'ont caché avec soin cette fâcheuse partie de ma situation. Mais je suis désolé de cette découverte, et à moins qu'au lieu

[3] Miss Speed was brought up by the Lady Viscountess Cobham, who left her above forty thousand pounds. She married Le Baron de Perrier, only son of the Comte de Virri, Embassador to England from Sardinia, whom he succeeded in the titles of Virri, and was himself Embassador in Spain and France. Madame de Virri had a great deal of wit. *Walpole.*

[4] Mr. Walpole was in Paris in 1775, when Madame, eldest sister of Louis XVI, was married to the Prince of Piemont. Monsr. and Madame de Virri made great entertainments on that occasion, and all that is said here of her address is strictly true. They were soon after disgraced, recalled, and banished to their estate on the King of Sardinia's discovering a secret correspondence between the Count and a clerk in the Secretary's office, the true history of which is not known. *Walpole.*

[5] These were particular friends of Miss Speed before her leaving England. Anna Chamber, Countess Temple, was niece by marriage of Lady Cobham. George, Lord Edgcumbe, was the third Baron and first Viscount of that family: his wife was daughter and heiress of Dr. Gilbert, Archbishop of York. George Simon, Lord Nuneham, was the second Earl of Harcourt. *Walpole.*

[6] I do not recollect what the word was in the original. *Walpole.*

de me blâmer vous ne me disiez que vous avez pitié de moi, je suis menacé d'une rechute. Mais je me flatte que Mr. Gray fera ma paix ; ses lettres vous mettront ou plutôt vous entretiendront tellement en bonne humeur que vous oublierez mon oubli et me croirez encore, Madame,

Votre, étc.[7]

[7] This letter was certainly written in English. I do not know by whom it was translated. Madame du Deffand did not understand a word of English. *Walpole.*

END OF VOL. IX

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